

THE
PROPHECIES
OF THE
HOLY QUR'AN

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PREFACE

The object of writing this book is to give the reader a fairly composite picture of the major Prophecies and Promises of the Holy Qur'ān.

It is a tragic fact that the vast majority of non-Muslims have, for some reason or other, never given a serious thought to what the Qur'ān says. Consequently, their ideas about the Qur'ān still remain very much lacking.

It should rightly be emphasised that the Qur'ān being of universal appeal does not narrowly aim to locate itself in a particular country, but it has been revealed as a "Guide and Mercy to all mankind," irrespective of race and colour. Therefore the Qur'ānic subject is of vital importance to both the Muslims and the non-Muslims alike.

Apart from being the "Book of Guidance," the Qur'ān, in the capacity of the "Conclusive Word," had to give mankind some idea of the events that were soon to follow after its revelation and of the other major ones which are yet to follow. Of the Qur'ānic Prophecies many have been fulfilled; many are being fulfilled; the rest shall be fulfilled!

The Qur'ān is the book of incontrovertible truths and not a book of hypothesis. I am convinced that

as scientific knowledge advances, it will gradually find means of accurately confirming its many other incontrovertible truths as it has recently confirmed many already.

The scope of the subject is so vast that I feel my attempt is only but a small speck in the vast field. The more you think, the more insignificant your attempts appear to be ; the more you write, the less it looks to you. Such a miracle is the Glorious Qur'ān !

I earnestly hope that the Muslims in particular will give a serious thought to the contents of the book. May Allah guide us on the Right Path and may He enfold us within His Mercy !

For the information of readers it may be mentioned here that most of the Qur'ānic quotations in this book have been taken from the English translation of the Holy Qur'ān by 'Allāmah 'Abdullah Yūsuf 'Alī, published by Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, the leading publisher of literature on Islam. Quotations have been partly copied exactly as they are, and partly paraphrased.

Limbe
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Q.I. Hingora

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1

REVELATION OF THE ENTIRE BOOK PROPHESED

- (a) Soon shall We send down to thee (Muhammad) a weighty Message (lxxiii. 5—Mecca).
- (b) By degrees shall We teach thee (Muhammad) to declare (the Message), so thou shalt not forget (lxxxvii. 6—Mecca).

Both the verses from two different Sūrahs belong to the earliest Meccan Revelations when only a bare portion of the Qur'ān was revealed but soon more was to follow. Here the Prophet is promised of the Weighty Message yet to be revealed to him by degrees in order to make it easy for him to remember and declare the Message. This Prophecy was duly fulfilled within the period of twenty-three years with the revelation of the entire Book as we now see it in its present form, and in 632 C.E. the Muslims were eventually reminded of this favour besides others in the words: "This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion" (v. 3).

CHALLENGE OF THE QUR'ĀN REMAINS UNBEATEN

- (a) This Qur'ān is not such as can be produced by other than Allah (x. 37—Mecca).
- (b) Say: "If the whole of mankind and Jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support" (xvii. 88—Mecca).
- (c) And if ye are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant, then produce a Sūrah like thereunto; and call your witnesses or helpers (if there are any) besides God, if your (doubts) are true.
- (d) But if ye cannot—and of a surety ye cannot—then fear the Fire whose fuel is Men and Stones,—which is prepared for those who reject Faith (ii. 23-24—Medina).
- (e) Or do they say, "he forged it?" Say: "Bring then a Sūrah like unto it, and call (to your aid) anyone you can, besides God, if it be ye speak the truth!"
- (f) Nay, they charge with falsehood that whose knowledge they cannot compass, even before the elucidation thereof hath reached them:

thus did those before them make charges of falsehood: but see what was the end of those who did wrong! (x. 38-39—Mecca).

It is a pity that a vast majority of the non-Muslims, particularly in the West, are under this false impression that the Qur'ān was composed by Muḥammad himself. This impression is largely gathered from the works of the anti-Qur'ān critics who are often inspired to produce such works with prejudice for the sake of prejudice.

In many cases this ignoble heritage of aversion to the Qur'ān has been handed down to them from the previous generations. Ignorance of Islam, ignorance of the history of the Qur'ān and ignorance of the Arabic language play no less important part in forming this false impression. But it should be remembered that greater the truth is, the greater resistance it receives.

It may be pointed out that besides the Qur'ān there are the Holy Prophet's Sayings duly recorded down. Let a non-Muslim scholar well versed in Arabic pick up a verse from the Qur'ān and compare it with a Saying of the Prophet with regard to the structure, beauty and the way of expression. The Qur'ānic verse will definitely beat the Saying of the Prophet in beauty, grandeur and power of expression and thus the difference between the God-made and

man-made will be quite clear to him.

If he is not satisfied with results, then let him produce a Sūrah like any Sūrah of the Qur'ān. This is an open challenge of the Qur'ān to those who think that it is not the word of God. It may be borne in mind that the challenge is offered not to any single individual whose brain-power and skill are, after all, limited, but it is offered to the whole mankind (including the Muslims) and the Jinns together. The challenge has remained unbeaten since the revelation of the Qur'ān, 1400 years ago, and so shall it remain for ever. Now, can there be any doubt as to the Qur'ān not being the Word of God? This is another living miracle of the Glorious Qur'ān.

Another important factor to bear in mind is that the Holy Prophet was an *ummi*, i.e. unlettered, and as such it is quite impossible for an unlettered man to produce a work of the standard of the Qur'ān which has, since its revelation, remained a powerful driving force in the lives of millions of Muslims in spiritual, moral, social and political fields. The Qur'ān refutes the allegation of the critics in these words:

- (a) . . . Before this thou too wast among those who knew it not (xii. 3—Mecca).
- (b) Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (Scriptures);—in the Law and the Gospel. . . . (vii. 157—Mecca).

- (c) . . . Thou knewest not (before) what was Revelation, and what was Faith . . . (xlii. 52—Mecca).

Even Muḥammad would not have escaped punishment had he invented a single verse in the name of God. This is what the Qur'ān says:

(This is) a Message sent down from the Lord of the Worlds. And if the Apostle were to invent any sayings in Our name, We should certainly seize him by his right hand, and We should certainly then cut off the artery of his heart: nor could any of you withhold (from Our wrath) (lxix. 43-47—Mecca).

And in chapter xxiv. we come across ten verses dealing with the subject of slander on 'Ā'yeshah, the Prophet's wife. The Prophet, like any other individual, would have safely omitted the insertion of the serious incident of purely private nature if he had composed the Book as the critics allege.

Similarly, we come across other passages on the life of the Prophet which throw ample light on his attitude in certain affairs but which were disapproved by Allah:

- (a) O Prophet! why holdest thou to be forbidden that which God has made lawful to thee? Thou seekest to please thy consorts . . . (lxvi. 1—Medina).
- (b) . . . But thou didst hide in thy heart that which God was about to make manifest: but

thou didst fear the people, but it is more fitting that thou shouldst fear God . . . (xxxiii. 37—Medina).

On the occasion when he granted too liberal exemptions to some people unwilling to take part in the Tabūk expedition, he was reminded:

God give thee grace! Why didst thou grant them exemption until those who told the truth were seen by thee in a clear light, and thou hadst proved the liars? (ix. 43—Medina).

And in the Book we read a chapter, "He (Muḥammad) frowned." It deals with a small incident which happened in Mecca. While engaged in explaining Islam to the chiefs of the Quraish, a blind man came and interrupted him by asking him a question concerning the faith. At this interruption the Prophet was annoyed and turned away from the blind man. This attitude of the Prophet was disapproved by God and he was mildly rebuked for that:

(The Prophet) frowned and turned away, because there came to him the blind man (interrupting). But what could tell thee but that perchance he might grow (in spiritual understanding)?—or that he might receive admonition, and the teaching might profit him? As to one who regards himself as self-sufficient, to him dost thou attend; though it is no blame to thee if he grow not (in spiritual understanding). But as to him who came to thee striving earnestly, and with fear (in his heart), of him wast thou unmindful (lxxx. 1-10—Mecca).

In case of his failure in carrying out his duties sincerely, the Prophet was warned in the words:

Thus have We revealed it to be a judgment of authority in Arabic. Wert thou to follow their (vain) desires after the knowledge which hath reached thee, then wouldst thou find neither protector nor defender against God (xiii. 37—Mecca).

And had We not given thee strength thou wouldst nearly have inclined to them a little.

In that case We should have made thee taste an equal portion (of punishment) in this life, and an equal portion in death: and moreover thou wouldst have found none to help thee against Us! (xvii. 74-75—Mecca).

These and several other similar passages are part of the Qur'ān and they go a great way in proving the Qur'ān to be the Word of God. Let the critic ponder over the foregoing passages with an unbiased mind or accept the challenge of the Qur'ān. Muḥammad was but a man and if he could "invent" the Qur'ān, why could you not?

3

THE QUR'ĀN MADE EASY

But We have indeed made the Qur'ān easy to understand and remember : then is there any that will receive admonition ? (liv. 22—Mecca).

There exist various Scriptures but none of them could entirely be memorised save the Qur'ān. Even a non-Arab Muslim child, whose mother tongue is not Arabic, can learn the whole Book by heart. To a non-Muslim this may seem to be a thing of wonder, but it is one of the living miracles of the Qur'ān. By no means could a book of the size of the Qur'ān with 6666 verses of different lengths be committed to memory without any difficulty, and it is the promise of this aid which the above verse refers. This prophecy is still being fulfilled.

In this connection, it may aptly be remarked that a non-Muslim, whoso he may be, will never be able to memorise the entire Qur'ān, however much he may try !

4

GUARANTEE OF THE QUR'ĀN'S PURITY PROPHESED

- (a) No falsehood can approach it from before or behind it : it is sent down by One, Full of Wisdom, Worthy of all Praise (xli. 42—Mecca).
- (b) Nay, this is a Glorious Qur'ān, (inscribed) in a Tablet Preserved ! (lxxxv. 2, 22—Mecca).
- (c) We have, without doubt, sent down the Message ; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption) (xv. 9—Mecca).

It is an important point to note that the promise of maintaining the purity of the Text intact was made thrice in Mecca, when the Qur'ān was yet in the gradual process of its revelation and Islam was then but a small thing despised and surrounded by hostile forces armed to the teeth. The enemy was thus determined to wipe out Islam once for all. To the people devoid of faith this promise then seemed ridiculous. But history has proved that Allah has fulfilled His Promise. It is nearly 1400 years since the Qur'ān was revealed and yet the Text retains its purity quite intact.

Man has been endeavouring to know as much more of this Glorious Book as possible. Even its alphabets, long and short vowels have been counted. Because of its widest reading, it has been subject to ceaseless research and comments that know no ending yet. It has remained unaffected irrespective of the march and development of history; and it shall remain so for ever.

Among the various scriptures now existing on this earth, if any that can proudly claim to the entire Word of God, it is only the Qur'ān that deserves this proud claim. It does not merely dwell on paper, but it has made its permanent home in the hearts of Muslims. Let all copies of the Qur'ān be destroyed beyond any recovery, but this destruction will, by no means, be the end of the Qur'ān. For, it dwells in the hearts of the Muslims from whose tongues it will continue its journey onwards. Is it not then one of the miracles of the Qur'ān? Is not the Qur'ān being guarded by Allah as He promises?

5

SUCCESS OF MUHAMMAD'S MISSION PROPHESED

- (a) O thou wrapped up (in a mantle) ! arise and deliver thy warning ! (lxxiv. 11, 2—Mecca).
- (b) And We will make it easy for thee (to follow) the simple (Path) (lxxxvii. 8—Mecca).

In the dark ages, amidst the old deep-dyed polytheism marked with anarchy and the social vice of every nature, the Prophet was commanded to preach Islam to his people whose teaching was in every respect in direct contrast with what his people had been following. He had spent the greater part of his life among his people and as such he knew their background history. He was thus well aware of the immensity of his task and the strong opposition he was to receive from his own people. But the Giver of Message Himself assured His messenger of clearing away all obstacles lying in his way.

History tells us that the difficulties lying in the way of the Message were soon overcome and thus was created a situation which paved the way for the

spread of the Message. The Property was fulfilled within a short period of twenty-three years when Islam became the standard religion of the greater part of Arabia.

6

VICTORY AND HIGH STATUS PROMISED TO MUHAMMAD

- (a) And soon will thy Guardian-Lord give thee (that wherewith) thou shalt be well-pleased (xciii. 5—Mecca).
- (b) . . . Soon will thy Lord raise thee to a Station of Praise and Glory (xvii. 79—Mecca).
- (c) If any think that God will not help him (His Apostle) in this world and the Hereafter, let him stretch out a rope to the ceiling and cut (himself) off: then let him see whether his plan will remove that which enrages (him)! (xxii. 51—Medina)

Much mystic meaning shrouds the above two verses. One of the meanings is the promise of the assignment of the honourable and glorious post in the Hereafter to our Prophet which fact is supported by the sayings of the Prophet himself.

Another meaning is the assurance that the days of the pagan persecution were about to end and the Prophet's mission was soon to accomplish the fruitful results.

In the third verse definite victory is promised to Muḥammad. And history shows that this promise was fulfilled when the Children of Unity carried the banner of Islam right through the whole of Arabia, in the Mediterranean regions and finally in the then known world. Within a short period, Islam reached the peak of glory which has no precedent in history.

Do people then still doubt that God will not crown Muḥammad with victory in the Hereafter? Let such people better hang themselves!

7

MUḤAMMAD PROMISED OF HIS SAFE ARRIVAL AT MEDINA

Verily, He Who ordained the Qur'ān for thee will bring thee back to the Place of Return . . . (xxviii. 85—Mecca).

This verse was revealed at Juhfa during the Prophet's journey to Medina. He was then overburdened with many worries—thoughts of home, thoughts of his nearest and dearest and above all the thoughts of the oppressed Muslims. The thought of the survival of Islam overruled all these thoughts. It was on this occasion that Allah's promise of his safe arrival at Medina came. It acted as a soothing balm to his troubled heart. The Message was yet not completely revealed and it was evident that the life of Islam then depended on the life of the Prophet. Allah fulfilled His promise by bringing him safely to Medina despite the enemy's plan to kill him.

In this connection it is worthy to note that a similar promise of safety was given to Jesus when he was in the house surrounded by the enemy. His heart

too was troubled like the heart of our Prophet, and on that occasion Allah promised Jesus, "O Jesus! I will take thee and raise thee to Myself and I will cleanse thee of those who disbelieve; I will make those who follow thee superior to those who reject faith to the Day of Resurrection."

The first three promises given to Jesus have already been fulfilled. The fourth promise of superiority of the Christians over the Rejecters of Faith is being fulfilled. It may be noted that it does not mean superiority over the Muslims as they are the Children of Unity.

8

MUHAMMAD PROMISED PROTECTION

- (a) Now await in patience the command of thy Lord, for verily thou art in Our eyes . . . (lii. 48—Mecca).
- (b) . . . And God will defend thee from men . . . (v. 70—Medina).
- (c) As for them, they are but plotting a scheme, and I am planning a scheme (lxxxvi. 15-16—Mecca).
- (d) . . . But if ye back up each other against him, truly God is his Protector and Gabriel and every righteous among those who believe,—and furthermore, the angels—will back (him) up (lxvi. 4—Medina).

The promise of safety of life is given to the Prophet in Mecca where he was surrounded by the hostile forces of every nature, but Allah never breaks His Promises as He says, "Never think that Allah would fail His Apostles in His Promise." It may be recalled that a similar promise of safety was given to Jesus when he was surrounded by the enemy on all sides but Allah fulfilled His Promise by raising Jesus

unto Himself. Time and again the enemy plotted to bring an end to the Prophet's life but Allah saved him each time.

It is necessary to give a short account of some unsuccessful attempts of the enemy in order to bring home the point.

(1) A large reward was offered for the murder of the Prophet and so the money-hungry bedouin armed to the teeth rushed in every direction to kill the Prophet after he had left Mecca for Medina. Amongst them was Surāqah bin Mālik who actually chanced to catch sight of the Prophet and his companion. When he was a few hundred yards away from the Prophet, he urged his horse to gallop but the creature refused to move any further and stood straight on its hind legs with the result that Surāqah fell flat on the ground. He soon realised his inability to carry out his design and therefore asked the Prophet to forgive him. The Prophet forgave him and he embraced Islam.

(2) Abū Sufyān bribed a bedouin to kill the Prophet but the Plan completely failed.

(3) In the Battle of Uḥud when the Muslims suffered heavy casualties on account of the disobedience of their archers, the enemy left no stone unturned to kill the Prophet, but Allah carried out His Promise of safety to the Prophet.

(4) After various successful troop movements against the Jewish garrisons in the area of the Khairbar, a Jewess invited the Prophet to a dinner and served him with a poisoned meat. But Allah informed the Prophet of this plot. Despite her great crime the Prophet pardoned the woman.

(5) While walking on a peace mission in a Jewish locality in Medina, a Jew let go a heavy stone over the Prophet from the top of a fortress but not the least harm was done to him.

It is these unsuccessful plots of the enemy that Allah brings to the mind of the Prophet in the following verse with a further assurance that His Plans will always outweigh those of the enemy:

Remember how the unbelievers plotted against thee, to keep thee in bonds or slay thee or get thee out of thy home. They plot and plan and God too plans but the best of planners is God (iii. 54).

9

MUHAMMAD DEFENDED AGAINST 'ĀṢ BIN WĀ'IL

For he who hateth thee,—he will be cut off
(from Future Hope) (cviii. 3—Mecca).

After a short talk with the Holy Prophet, 'Āṣ b. Wā'il was jokingly asked by the pagan chiefs of the Quraish as to whom he was talking to. The evil man replied that he was talking with "Ab-tar" meaning a sonless man. When the Holy Prophet heard this, he was much grieved because his two sons had recently died. Allah comforted the Holy Prophet with the glad tidings of the great name and fame he was to be crowned with. It was 'Āṣ himself who died without any posterity. He had to pay a heavy price for scoffing at the Prophet. This prophecy was duly fulfilled.

10

GOD FULFILLS MUHAMMAD'S VISION

Truly did God fulfil the vision for His Apostle : ye shall enter the Sacred Mosque, if God wills, with minds secure, heads shaved, hair cut short, and without fear. For He knew what ye knew not, and He granted, besides this, a speedy victory (xlviii. 27—Medina).

Prior to his departure from Medina for the intended performance of 'Umrah, the Holy Prophet had a dream that he had entered the Sacred Mosque at Mecca and which he had disclosed to his followers. But the journey resulted in the signing of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah and according to the terms of the Treaty, the Muslims were not entitled to enter Mecca the same year. On the return journey some of the Companions of the Prophet said that the Prophet's dream had not come true. To this the Muslims were promised that they would enter the Sacred Mosque and that their victory was quite in sight. This prophecy and the dream of the Prophet came true as the Muslims entered the Sacred Mosque the following

year, i.e., seventh year of the Hijrah. Not only that, but Mecca was conquered in the eighth year of the Hijrah and which was soon followed by many other speedy victories in and around the Arabian peninsula.

Truly did God fulfil the promise for His Apostle: "He shall enter the Sacred Mosque, the Kaaba, with his hands raised in prayer, and with the cry: 'For the sake of Allah and His religion, I have fought this war.'"

From the time of the Hijrah, the Muslims were victorious in every battle, and the Muslims were not content with the conquest of Mecca, but they wanted to conquer the whole of Arabia. On the 12th of Rabi' al-Thani, 630 A.D., the Prophet and his Companions of the Prophet said that the Muslims were not content with the conquest of Mecca, but they wanted to conquer the whole of Arabia. To this the Muslims were answered that they would enter the Sacred Mosque and that their victory was quite in sight. This prediction and the dream of the Prophet came true as the Muslims entered the Sacred Mosque the following

MUHAMMAD IS THE LAST PROPHET

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Apostle of God, and the Seal of the Prophets (xxxiii. 40—Medina).

In the hierarchy of the Prophets, Muhammad is the last Prophet and consequently the Qur'ān is the Last Perfect Message for the guidance of mankind. Now no Prophet is to come and hence no Book is to be revealed any more.

Nearly 1400 years have passed away and the teaching of Muhammad has yet marvellously remained unaffected with the march of time. The Islamic history records with pain the accounts of the hypocrites claiming prophethood at different intervals and the fate of such pretenders is too well known to need any comments. Still more hypocrites with mentality like Mirza Ghulām Ahmad's and armed with newer tactics might raise their heads up, but this verse shall subdue them as it has subdued others alike in the past. They are only shortlived, miserable creatures

who have no ground to stand on. To Islam they can do nothing more than a temporary little worry.

At present Qadianism is the only movement which is causing a little headache to Islam. But it may be added with certainty that this movement will eventually meet the same fate as that of Dīn-i-Ilāhī of the great Indian Mughal Emperor Akbar who, despite great power and resources at his command, utterly failed to make his new creed acceptable to Muslims.

Musailamah, the great liar, lives in history with disgrace. Bahāism has lost ground and Qadianism is fighting a losing battle. The "Seal of Prophets" has crushed them all and so shall it crush others of the kind similarly in future.

12

DEATH OF THE PROPHET
PROPHESED

- (a) We granted not to any man before thee permanent life (here): if then thou shouldst die, would they live permanently? (xxi. 34—Mecca).
- (b) Whether We shall show thee (within thy lifetime) part of what We promised them or take to Ourselves thy soul, (before it is all accomplished) thy duty is to make (the Message) reach them: it is Our part to call them to account (xiii. 40—Mecca).
- (c) Truly thou wilt die (one day) and truly they (too) will die (one day) (xxxix. 30—Mecca).
- (d) Say: "O my Lord! if Thou wilt show me (in my lifetime) that which they are warned against" (xxiii. 93—Mecca).
- (e) Muḥammad is no more than an Apostle: many were the Apostles that passed away before him. If he died or were slain, will ye then turn back on your heels? If any did turn back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to God . . . (iii. 144—Medina).
- (f) Even if We take thee away, We shall be sure to exact retribution from them (xliii. 41—Mecca).

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PROPHESED

- (a) We granted not to any man before thee permanent life (here): if then thou shouldst die, would they live permanently? (xxi. 34—Mecca).
- (b) Whether We shall show thee (within thy lifetime) part of what We promised them or take to Ourselves thy soul, (before it is all accomplished) thy duty is to make (the Message) reach them: it is Our part to call them to account (xiii. 40—Mecca).
- (c) Truly thou wilt die (one day) and truly they (too) will die (one day) (xxxix. 30—Mecca).
- (d) Say: "O my Lord! if Thou wilt show me (in my lifetime) that which they are warned against" (xxiii. 93—Mecca).
- (e) Muḥammad is no more than an Apostle: many were the Apostles that passed away before him. If he died or were slain, will ye then turn back on your heels? If any did turn back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to God . . . (iii. 144—Medina).
- (f) Even if We take thee away, We shall be sure to exact retribution from them (xliii. 41—Mecca).

- (g) Or We shall show thee that (accomplished) which We have promised them: for verily We shall prevail over them (xliii. 42—Mecca).
 (h) . . . Nor is it right for you that ye should annoy God's Apostle, or that ye should marry his widows *after him* . . . (xxxiii. 53—Medina).

We can draw two main conclusions from the above quotations dealing with almost the same topic:

- (1) The death of the Holy Prophet is prophesied.
- (2) The enemies of the Prophet are forewarned of the part of punishment to befall them in this world during the lifetime of the Prophet.

When the Prophet's mission had achieved the objective of conveying the entire Message to mankind, he had to say good-bye to this transitory world. The Muslims were accordingly informed in advance of his death by the Prophet himself as well as through the Qur'ān as quoted above. But when the inevitable thing happened, none was prepared to believe the news on account of the Prophet's awe-inspiring personality, his high post, miracles and spiritual powers. For Islam it was a serious problem which challenged its very survival. At this critical juncture, it was Abū Bakr who came to the aid of the Muslims and solved the problem by the quotations from the Qur'ān.

To the Prophet Allah had several times made a

promise of punishing the enemies of Islam during his lifetime and this promise was duly fulfilled when the enemy's power, strength and influence completely broke down and the ring-leaders were killed on the battlefield of Badr.

MUSLIMS : THE CHOSEN PEOPLE OF GOD

- (a) Ye are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoying what is right, forbidding what is wrong . . . (iii. 110—Medina).
- (b) . . . He has chosen you, and has imposed no difficulties on you in religion . . . (xxii. 78—Medina).
- (c) Those who have faith and do righteous deeds, —they are the best of creatures (xcviii. 7—Medina).

The Children of Israel were once the Chosen People of God for the spread of His Ideal, but owing to their persistent disobedience God's curse befell them and since then they have been living disgraceful lives.

The Muslims were then chosen for the spread of this Ideal and in the beginning they carried out their duties to the satisfaction of God and thus received a ceaseless downpour of God's blessings. But then they relaxed though the nature of this duty never expected them to relax. The relaxation still continues

and as a result of this they are now even bereaved of Hope, the very essence of Faith. Consequently, they are now undergoing the punishment for shirking off this duty assigned to them in the capacity of the Chosen People.

It should be noted that it is the never-changing practice of God not to cease His bestowal of Special Favours upon His chosen people as long as they carry out their duties wholeheartedly. But when they shirk off their duties, it is the chosen people who are chosen for a heavier punishment. The sad story of the Children of Israel is before the eyes of the Muslims, which they read in the Qur'ān every day. Are the Muslims of today, in any way, better off than the children of Israel? Does not the history of the past two centuries prove beyond doubt that the nature of punishment inflicted on the Muslims in all parts of the world is in many respects similar to that inflicted on the cursed Jews at different intervals of history? Do the Muslims "enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong"? But how on earth can they forbid ill-conduct when they do not enjoin the right conduct themselves?

GOD'S MERCY PROMISED TO MUSLIMS WHO PROTECT OTHER MUSLIMS

The Believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practise regular charity, and obey God and His Apostle. On them will God pour His mercy: for God is Exalted in Power, Wise (ix. 71—Medina).

The Believers fulfilling their duties referred in the above verse are the protecting friends of one another irrespective of the distant barriers that might exist between them. They are bound by Faith-ties which are stronger than blood-ties. Each is, therefore, an essential part of the Islamic Brotherhood and as such each has obligations to his brethren. One of the notable obligations is to protect another Muslim when such protection is needed. And in return they are assured of the special favour from the Mighty and Wise Allah.

Islam demands that at any cost the aid and protection must be provided to the Muslims needing

them and negligence or refusal on the part of other Muslims renders the latter sinful and ultimately they are thus cut off from the special favour of God.

But how many miserable Muslims today need aid and protection and still the aid and protection from other Muslims are not forthcoming? How can the Muslims now expect the special favour from God?

GOOD REWARDS PROMISED TO MUSLIMS IN BOTH THE WORLDS

(a) Behold ! verily on the friends of God there is no fear, nor shall they grieve.

Those who believe and (constantly) guard against evil.

For them are Glad Tidings, in the life of the Present and in the Hereafter : no change can there be in the Words of God. This is indeed the supreme Felicity (x. 62-64—Mecca).

(b) For those who believe and work righteousness is (every) blessedness, and a beautiful place of (final) return (xiii. 29—Mecca).

The Muslims who keep their duty to Allah are promised good rewards in this world and in the Hereafter. As far as the promise of the reward in this world is concerned, Allah fulfilled it when He ceaselessly gave to the Muslims for over a millenary all that any nation could desire for in this world. However, it should be noted that the measureless special favours of Allah are attached to the condition of keeping their duty to Allah. When a Muslim fails in this duty, the special favours cease to come to him.

At present the Muslims cannot be proud of possessing those special favours which they had in the past when Islam was at its height. This was because the Muslims were quite strict in keeping their duty to Allah. The Muslims could still restore the lost glory as the period of Allah's Promise has not yet expired.

PROTECTION AND AID PROMISED TO MUSLIMS

- (a) As to those who turn (for friendship) to God, His Apostle, and the (Fellowship of) Believers,—it is the Fellowship of God that must certainly triumph (v. 59—Medina).
- (b) . . . God will certainly aid those who aid His (cause);—for verily God is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might (xxii 40—Medina).
- (c) Verily God will defend those who Believe... (xxii. 38—Medina).
- (d) We are your Protectors in this life and in the Hereafter . . . (xli. 31—Mecca).
- (e) And another (favour will He bestow), which ye do love,—help from God and a speedy victory. So give the Glad Tidings to the Believers (lxi. 13—Medina).
- (f) Yea,—if ye remain firm, and act aright, even if the enemy should rush here on you in hot haste, your Lord would help you with five thousand angels making a terrific onslaught (iii. 125—Medina).
- (g) In the end We deliver Our Apostles and those who believe : thus it is fitting on Our part that

We should deliver those who believe !
(x. 103—Medina).

(h) Allah is the Protector of those who have faith . . . (ii. 257—Medina).

Protection, aid and victory are the key-words of the promises given to the Muslims in the above verses.

In Mecca the Pagans inflicted upon them various inhuman tortures thus making their stay there quite impossible. They were thus obliged to leave their homes for the Cause of Allah and as such Allah assured them of His Help.

With their arrival at Medina, they had to face altogether new threats including the threat of the armed forces against them. The Pagans were now on the actual war-path and intensified their war activities which now engulfed the whole of Hejaz. It was the most critical period for Islam. However, on these occasions, the assurance of God's help came to them.

It may be recalled that before their migration to Medina, they were protected though they were quite a few in number and, as such, they could have been wiped out at any time. Needless to remind that how many similar Muslim minorities now living in the non-Muslim countries are still being protected by God ! It is not the UNO that protects them ; nor is it the lip-service of the Muslim countries whose help

is merely marked by loud slogans and high-sounding resolutions which the Muslim minorities hardly need in their present hour of distress.

Probably the greatest tragedy of the present Muslim countries lies in the fact that each is more interested in the individual scientific and material progress rather than their general progress as a whole and which could only be achieved by honourable survival of all including the Muslim minorities in other countries. Without this, the individual progress of a Muslim country would be meaningless and would hardly bring any fruitful results. The Bond of Islam demands that each Muslim has not only to live for himself but for other Muslims as well. In other words, a Muslim has to guard the life and property of another Muslim living far from him. Unless this is realised, Islam has little interest in the individual progress of a Muslim or a Muslim country.

The promises given in the above verses were soon carried out as can be seen from the records of Islamic history. The offer of these promises is still there to welcome the Muslims with open arms. But in order to deserve it we must first act according to the Commands of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet.

PROMISE OF HELP TO THE MUSLIM REFUGEES

To those who leave their homes in the cause of God, after suffering oppression,—We will assuredly give a goodly home in this world; but truly the reward of the Hereafter will be greater, if only they realised (this) (xvi 41—Mecca).

The reference is to the Muslim refugees of Mecca who had to leave their homes on account of the persistent religious persecution, but the promise of help holds true of all such Muslim refugees at all times. It is equally true of the mass exodus of the Muslim refugees from India to Pakistan. Such emigrants are assured of better homes in both the worlds.

To cite only one example of the Companions of Suffah. These poverty and hunger stricken refugees numbering about 400 were homeless in Medina and as such they stayed under a big shed adjoining the Mosque. But "with every difficulty there is relief" and so the star of these unhappy people soon changed in terms of the Promise of Allah and they rose to prominence and prosperity within a remarkably short

period.

As for the objection about the miserable fate of the great number of the Indian Muslim refugees in Pakistan and that of the Arab refugees from Palestine, it must be noted with pain that more fortunate Muslims never think of their less fortunate brethren. It should be stressed that all Muslims, irrespective of race, are joined together by the bond of Islam and this bond demands that all must equally share the pleasures and sorrows of life together. The more fortunate Muslims have obligations to fulfil towards the less fortunate ones and if they fail not in their duty, then they will be requited in this world and in the Hereafter.

Another thing to note is that in the past the Muslim bore every new adversity with greater patience and consequently it strengthened his faith yet more. But now every adversity shakes his faith in Islam.

The Qur-ān loudly proclaims: "You shall certainly be tried and tested in your possessions and in your personal selves; and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you, from those who received the Book before you and from those who worship many gods. But if you persevere patiently and guard against evil, then that will be a determining factor in all affairs."

18

CRITERION TO JUDGE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG PROMISED TO MUSLIMS

O ye who believe! if ye fear God, He will grant a Criterion (to judge between right and wrong), remove from you (all) evil (that may afflict) you, and forgive you: for God is the Lord of grace unbounded (viii. 29—Medina).

In an address to the Muslims the grant of the Criterion is attached to the condition of "fear of Allah". With the disappearance of the fear of Allah the said Criterion has disappeared too. But the offer is still open to the Muslims.

GAINS PROMISED TO MUSLIMS

- (a) And many gains will they acquire (besides); and God is Exalted in Power, Full of Wisdom.
- (b) God has promised you many gains that ye shall acquire, and He has given you these beforehand; and He has restrained the hands of men from you; that it be a Sign for the Believers and that He may guide you to a Straight Path;
- (c) And other gains (there are), which are not within your power, but which God has compassed: and God has power over all things (xlviii. 19-21—Medina).

The gains referred are the gains derived from the victories which the Muslims won between the seventh and sixteenth centuries on the lands extending between the Apennines and the Himalayas, and during which long period Islam remained an invincible power. Besides these material (political) gains, the Muslims achieved other notable gains in the moral and spiritual spheres, as the political victories alone cannot make a nation and its religion great. All these gains combined, were instrumental in help-

ing Islam to spread over the vast areas of this globe and to make its teaching acceptable to the different nations.

It may be added that the gains remained intact in the hands of the Muslims as long as they held fast to the entire Message of Islam. In the capacity of the Chosen People of God, they should not have failed in their duty like the Children of Israel. The little that is left is also slipping away from their hands!

BETTER ECONOMIC CONDITIONS PROMISED TO MUSLIMS

- (a) O My servants who believe ! truly spacious is My earth ; therefore serve ye Me—(and Me alone) (xxix. 56—Mecca).
- (b) But those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, and believe in the (Revelation) sent down to Muhammad—for it is the Truth from their Lord,—He will remove from them their ills and improve their conditions (xlvii. 2—Medina).
- (c) O ye who believe ! truly the Pagans are unclean; so let them not, after this year of theirs, approach the Sacred Mosque, and if ye fear poverty, soon will God enrich you, if He wills, out of His bounty, for God is All-Knowing, All-Wise (ix. 28—Medina).
- (d) God will establish in strength those who believe, with the Word that stands firm, in this world and in the Hereafter; but God will leave, to stray, those who do wrong : God doeth what He willeth (xiv. 27—Mecca).
- (e) Say : “O ye My servants who believe ! fear your Lord. Good is (the reward) for those who do good in this world. Spacious is God’s

earth! Those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure” (xxxix. 10—Mecca.)

Two main important conclusions can be drawn from the above verses :

- (1) Allah’s earth is spacious for the believers.
- (2) Divine Promise of improving the economic conditions of the Muslims.

In the earlier days of Islam the Muslims underwent great hardships and sufferings of all kinds, viz. social and economic boycott, physical tortures, murders and expulsion from their homes. It was the poor class who had first responded to the Call and as such it was they who suffered most. As a matter of fact it was the period of great trial that the Muslims passed through, and from the annals of the Islamic history it can be seen that never have the Muslims been put to such a severe trial. And amidst their suffering they were consoled that the happy days were soon to come.

The Muslims bore every persecution and hardship with a smiling face. Every new torture strengthened their faith in Islam yet more. They refused to be intimidated or subdued by the Meccan autocrats who believed in “*Might is right*”. But how long was this injustice to last ? At last a happy day dawned for the Muslims and the bright days welcomed them.

History bears witness that only within two decades the once poor and despised Muslims became the masters of the land. This was immediately followed by the expeditious improvement of their economic condition to such an extent that it was hard to find a poor man who could accept charity. Wealth poured in and the coffers of the state were full to the brim. The earth turned out so spacious for the Muslims that a cry went on, "The land that belongs to Allah, belongs to the Muslims." In other words, all earth belongs to the Muslims. All barriers of land and sea vanished at the approach of the Muslims.

Both these prophecies came true. Allah still holds the same promise to the Muslims, but the Muslims must first deserve such an offer.

We all claim to belong to the Single Brotherhood of Islam, but this sacred Brotherhood has been torn with unhealthy *isms* and *logies* coiling round our faith, political strifes and jealousies, perverting logomachy and mournful depravity with the result that the objective of an honourable survival, which this Brotherhood promises, has been shattered to pieces. Consequently it is right to say that it is we who have failed Islam and not that Islam has failed us.

We can see the results before our own eyes. A Muslim of one country is considered as an alien in

another Muslim country, though both the countries profess to belong to the same Brotherhood of Islam. One Muslim country, under the pretext of "upholding" Islam, uses the hard-earned influence and resources against another Muslim country rather than using it to strengthen it, though it is morally bound to do so. It is a pity that so much vital strength is being wasted away, which strength we need more than anything else. Rivalry for power between political leaders is in full swing. Boundary questions are given more importance rather than the vital question of UNITY. Will Afghanistan, as a matter of fact, lose anything if she gives away a hillock to Pakistan? Ultimately, it will be the land of Islam which all Muslims will share equally, be where they may, as they all are the component parts of one great community. If the earth has now become narrow for the Muslims, then who is to be blamed? It is true that an idle workman always finds faults with his tools.

21

PERSECUTORS OF THE MUSLIMS PUNISHED

Those who persecute (or draw into temptation) the believers, men and women, and do not turn in repentance will have the Penalty of Hell : they will have the Penalty of the Burning Fire (lxxxv. 10—Mecca).

Those who persecute the Muslims should prepare themselves for the punishment which is sure to be inflicted on them. In addition to the promise of punishment in the Hereafter, are such persecutors not punished in this world ?

22

ROME'S VICTORY OVER PERSIA AND THAT OF MUSLIMS OVER THE PAGANS

The Roman Empire has been defeated—

In a land close by ; but they, (even) after (this) defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious—

Within a few years. With God is the Decision in the Past and in the Future : on that Day shall the Believers rejoice—

With the help of God. He helps whom He will, and He is Exalted in Might, Most Merciful.

(It is) the promise of God. Never does God depart from His promise : but most men understand not (xxx. 2-6—Mecca).

These verses were revealed at Mecca in 615 C.E. when the Romans were defeated by the Persians in all the regions bordering Arabia. The Pagan Arabs welcomed this news and rejoiced at the victory of the Persians over the Romans for they, like the Persians, were polytheists and the Roman Christians, like the Muslims, worshipped One God. To humiliate Islam, the Pagans repeatedly referred to this subject contending that God's power could never be supreme

and absolute as the Qur'ān taught, since the worshippers of many gods had gained mastery over the worshippers of One God.

To this the answer came in the above verses prophesying the defeat of the Persians by the Romans and that of the Quraish by the Muslims within ten years. Accordingly, this prophecy was exactly fulfilled when Heraclius defeated the Persians at the decisive battle of Issus in 622 C.E. and the Romans victoriously entered the heart of Persia in 624 C.E. Exactly in the same year the Muslims gained a victory over the Meccan Pagans at Badr and the Believers "rejoiced on that day" as prophesied in the Qur'ān ten years ago.

23

**"MUSLIMS TO SUCCEED ROMANS
AND PERSIANS" PROPHESED**

- (a) God has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion—the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after the fear in which they (lived), to one of security and peace: "They will worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me." If any do reject Faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked (xxiv. 55—Medina).
- (b) Or think ye that ye shall be abandoned, as though God did not know those among you who strive with might and main, and take none for friends and protectors except God, His Apostle, and the (community of) Believers? But God is well-acquainted with (all) that ye do (ix. 16—Medina).
- (c) God has decreed; "It is I and My Apostle who must prevail": for God is One full of Strength, able to enforce His Will.
- (d) ... Truly it is the Party of God that will achieve Felicity . . . (lviii. 21-22—Medina).

(e) O ye who believe! if ye will aid (the cause of) God He will aid you, and plant your feet firmly (lviii. 22—Medina).

Allah gives the promise of gains to the Muslims and these gains, it may be recalled, are all worldly gains as Muslims too, like other people, are interested in the immediate gains rather than the distant but permanent gains. But obviously every promise of gain is always attached to certain conditions which must first be fulfilled before one reaps the gain.

Allah offers the promise of these gains to the Muslims :

- (1) I shall cause you to succeed the present rulers.
- (2) I shall establish Islam in authority.
- (3) I shall bring you peace.

Allah continued to fulfil His Promises as long as the Muslims continued to fulfil the conditions as laid down in the verses. For over a millenary they remained the virtual masters of the lands; Islam remained firmly established in the lands and they enjoyed peace, prosperity and security.

But the position has now changed. The gains have gradually slipped away from their hands from the time they grew reluctant to fulfil the conditions. So other people have succeeded them; Islam now no longer enjoys the authority even in the so-called "Muslim countries," and all Muslim countries live

in a state of fear and insecurity.

The Middle East—the stronghold of Islam—has been divided into pro-Western and pro-Communist blocs; Pakistan faces the constant danger of attack from India; Indonesia, on account of her geographical position, might, any moment, become a prey to Communism, and the North African Muslim countries are too busy with their self-imposed internal problems.

But despite this catastrophic position, the Qur'ānic Promise of reacquiring the same gains does exist and with this exists the hope of regaining what has already been lost. But the Muslims must make a move first and it must be a joint move.

VICTORY OVER THE QURAISH PROPHESED

Verily, We have granted thee a manifest Victory
(xlvi. 1—Medina)

The year of revelation is the sixth year of the Hijrah when Mecca was still under the sway of the pagan autocracy, and the Children of Unity were still barred to go to Mecca and perform the rites of pilgrimage. The Muslims in Mecca still concealed their faith in Islam as this was punishable by various sentences including the death sentence.

In the Dhul Qa'd of the sixth year of the Hijrah, the Prophet proceeded to Mecca with about 1500 unarmed followers with the intention of performing 'Umrah as, according to the long established practice of the Arabs, all fighting ceased during the sacred months and every Arab, be he who he might, had the right to visit the Sacred Enclosure in Mecca. The pagans came to know of the intended visit of the Muslims. They threw aside the long honoured Arab custom of ceasing all fight during the sacred months and marched out to fight the unarmed, peaceful

Muslims. Somehow or other the fight did not take place and a truce was signed instead. This is known as the "Treaty of Hudaibiyah".

The significant result of this Treaty was that the Meccans for the first time recognised Islam as a power, which meant the emergence of an Islamic State.

But one of the terms of the Treaty was, "Fugitives from the Quraish to the Muslims were to be returned but not the fugitives from the Muslims to the Quraish." This being against the principle of give-and-take was very much objected to by the Muslims. It was on this occasion that the Muslims were informed through revelation that eventually the balance of the Treaty weighed in their favour, and that the victory of Islam over polytheism lay in the Treaty. And it did as could be seen from the trend of the events following the signing of the Treaty. In fact, more persons accepted Islam in two years beginning from the signing of the Treaty and the conquest of Mecca than the total previous number. With the conquest of Mecca in less than two years this prophecy came true. And the conquest of Mecca was soon followed by other major victories.

25

CHRISTIANS CAN BE FRIENDS OF MUSLIMS BUT NOT THE JEWS

Strongest among men in enmity to the Believers wilt thou find the Jews and Pagans; and nearest among them in love to the Believers wilt thou find those who say, "We are Christians," because amongst these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant (v. 85—Medina).

The old enmity of the Jews with the Muslims is based on religious rather than on political grounds. The enmity is too well known to need any detailed comments. In recent years it has reached the climax with the appearance of the state of Israel in the Middle East and the war-mongering activities of the new state are proving a menace to the peace of the area. No Muslim country has so far recognised Israel, nor is it likely that any of them will ever recognise it.

The Jews and the Muslims can never be friends whereas the Christians and the Muslims can be as prophesied by the Qur'ān. All Christian countries have friendly relations with Muslim countries as can be seen today.

26

"REMEMBER ME (ALLAH), I WILL RE- MEMBER YOU"

- (a) If anyone withdraws himself from remembrance of (God) Most Gracious, We appoint for him an evil one, to be an intimate companion to him.
- (b) Such (evil ones) really hinder them from the Path, but they think that they are being guided aright (xliii. 36-37—Mecca).

Elsewhere in the Qur'ān we come across the verse reading, "And he gives you of all that you ask for. But if you count the favours of God, never will you be able to number them."

The verse refers to God's favours which are too innumerable to be counted. Not in the least can a man repay a single obligation of God. But in order to make himself conscious of God's favours, it is incumbent upon him to remember Him. Nevertheless, such remembrance does not in any way entitle a man to claim that he repays God's obligations. It only serves to make him conscious of the obligations and that is what God desires from man.

Now if a man fails in this, though humanity demands that he should not, then such a man is cut off from the true Guidance and all its benefits. Such a loss is far greater than any material loss he can imagine.

It is painful to add that in many respects these verses hold true of the present Muslims' attitude to the subject of God's remembrance. It may be borne in mind that God refers to this subject in the Qur'ān at more than 700 places insisting upon the Muslims to remember Him by "regular worship". But away they go from it ignoring the benefits it offers.

The present Muslim is proud of building a grand mosque which presents a beautiful sight to the beholders. But after the call for the congregational prayer, one sees nothing inside save the attractive architecture and a few aged people, too aged, each having a leg in the grave! It may be justly remarked that the real greatness of a mosque does not lie in its grand size and beautiful architecture, but in the large number of people attending the prayers.

27

MUSLIMS CAN STILL RESTORE THE
GLORY THAT WAS ISLAM

- (a) Because God will never change the Grace which He hath bestowed on a people, until they change what is in their (own souls) . . . (viii. 53—Medina).
- (b) . . . Verily never will God change the condition of a people until they change it themselves . . . (xiii, 11—Medina).

How accurately the above verses speak about the present miserable plight of the Muslims! They are a warning and at the same time an advice to the Muslims as much as they are to any other people.

The Muslims have changed the Grace into Disgrace by changing obedience into disobedience. They can still restore their past position; the initiative lies solely with them. They can, if they think they can.

GRAVE WARNING TO MUSLIMS TOO

- (a) Unless ye go forth, He will punish you with a grievous penalty, and put others in your place; but Him ye would not harm in the least, for God hath power over all things (ix. 39—Medina).
- (b) And hold fast, all together, by the Rope which God (stretches out for you), and be not divided amongst yourselves . . . (iii. 103—Medina).
- (c) . . . But God is free of all wants, and it is ye that are needy. If ye turn back (from the Path), He will substitute in your stead another people; then they would not be like you (xlvii. 38—Medina).

From the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Muslims began to hold the Rope of Allah half-heartedly with the result that the Mighty Brotherhood of Islam which had so far prevented the Western Christian powers to overrun the great Empire of the Crescent was divided into small nations and principalities, each interested in its own safety and survival. Thus naturally each fell an easy prey to the invading

Western powers and the others did nothing beyond shedding the crocodile tears. They did not jointly run to the aid of the victim thus ignoring the Warning of the Qur'ān. Such a behaviour was quite contrary to the very essence of Islam and each had to bear the disastrous consequences.

Everyone can now see with his own eyes that the punishment has already come and other folks have been chosen. The chain of calamities befalling the Muslims seems to have no ending!

THOSE WHO IGNORE THE QUR'ĀN ARE PUNISHED

- (a) Those who fulfil the Covenant of God and fail not in their plighted word ;
Those who join together those things which God hath commanded to be joined, hold their Lord in awe, and fear the terrible reckoning (xiii. 20-21—Mecca).
- (b) But those who break the Covenant of God, after having plighted their word thereto, and cut asunder those things which God has commanded to be joined, and work mischief in the land :—on them is the curse ; for them is the terrible Home (xiii. 25—Mecca).
- (c) It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by God and His Apostle, to have any option about their decision : if anyone disobeys God and His Apostle, he is indeed on a clearly wrong Path (xxxiii. 36—Mecca).
- (d) ... If any contend against God and His Apostle, God is strict in punishment (viii. 13—Medina).
- (e) O ye who believe ! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly ; and follow not the footsteps of the Evil One, for he is to you an avowed enemy. If ye backslide after the Clear (Signs) have

come to you then know that God is Exalted in Power, Wise (ii. 208-209—Medina).

- (f) ... But if anyone, after God's favour has come to him, substitutes (something else) God is strict in punishment (ii. 211—Medina).
- (g) The Prophet is closer to the Believers than their own selves . . . (xxxiii. 6—Medina).
- (h) Ye have indeed in the Apostle of God a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for anyone whose hope is in God and the Final Day, and who engages much in the praise of God (xxxiii. 21—Medina).
- (i) . . . So it is those who believe in him, honour him, help him, and follow the Light which is sent down with him,—it is they who will prosper (vii. 157—Mecca).
- (j) . . . So fear them (wicked) not, but fear Me ; and that I may complete My favours on you and ye may (consent to) be guided (ii. 150—Medina).
- (k) For every Message is a limit of time, and soon shall ye know it (vi. 67—Mecca).

Strange though it may appear, the above passages accurately describe the characteristics of the present-day Muslims and they are a warning to the Muslims as they are to any other nation. Going through them carefully, we can draw the following main conclusions :

- (1) Islam is easy to practise irrespective of any change of time and space.

- (2) The Muslims have to accept and at the same time practise the entire Message given to them in order to deserve the special favours from the Almighty. Partial acceptance puts them in a precarious position: there is no middle course.
- (3) The change of time cannot change the decrees of the Qur'ān.
- (4) The Qur'ān is the Perfect Message and will remain so till the Day of Resurrection.
- (5) Those who change Allah's grace into disgrace are punished.
- (6) The Muslims must fear none but Allah alone in order to achieve the successful objectives in this world and in the Hereafter.
- (7) Anyone who opposes the decisions of the Qur'ān and the Prophet is clearly on the wrong path.

The above conclusions are of vital concern to the Muslims and as such they must ponder over them with a serious mind. They must carefully study the causes and effects of their decline which is deteriorating every day. The cause of their decline is none other than their lethargic attitude towards the Qur'ān.

The Muslims must prudently take every advantage that the Holy Qur'ān offers. And obviously with their rise the prestige of the Qur'ān will rise and with their decline the prestige of the Qur'ān will

decline. Thus heavy is the responsibility that rests upon the Muslims.

Today we find four types of people holding different views about the Qur'ān, viz.

- (1) Those who openly show hostility to the Qur'ān for the sake of hostility, e.g. the unbelievers.
- (2) Those who think that the Qur'ān is too rigid to follow in these modern "civilised" and advanced times. This outrageous attitude directly comes into conflict with the very aim of the Qur'ān for which it has been revealed and thus it reduces it to a Medieval Book of little use in modern times.
- (3) There are others who do not dismiss the entire Book on the grounds of rigidity unlike the second category, but think that the Qur'ānic Laws regarding divorce, theft, adultery and murder are too "inhuman" to suit the modern "civilisation". According to their view, it is, therefore, obvious that human nature changes for better with the march of time whereas this is quite absurd and fallacious as could be perceived by examining the recent comparative records of crimes now rising at an unparalleled pace. We must also take into account juvenile crimes now seriously facing every country. The human

nature thus never changes, however great be the human progress in various fields of life.

The trouble arises on account of the general belief that man continually makes "progress". He takes strides from crude living to refine culture; advances from ignorance to knowledge; climbs down from barbarity to civilisation. This way of thinking makes him believe that the laws formed long ago are quite inept in the "progressive" era of today and as such they must be replaced or amended.

This fallacy arises in his mind because he judges moral progress in terms of material and scientific progress, whereas moral progress is quite different from the material and scientific progress. The scientific progress may go on and on without any stoppage but the moral progress may come to a standstill due to the inertness on the part of the people. Thus the two are poles apart and are not related to each other in any way.

What does the rise and fall of the empires mean? Does it mean that the lack of material and scientific progress was instrumental in the fall of every empire? It is a plain historical fact that the cause of the fall of empires was the moral depression of their people.

Islam's prior concern is to raise the moral and spiritual standard of her followers and once this is achieved, the other progress follows soon as it did

in the past. The achievement of scientific progress without moral progress is bound to meet with disaster. The scientific progress, which has reached its peak of glory, is now threatened with its own forces of destruction, as could be seen from the trend of the present world events, especially in the West. It appears man is now approaching his own destruction with his own hands!

The high standard of morality must therefore be maintained at every cost to save mankind from disaster. The evil elements must be dealt with drastically. The laws of a country must have iron hands to deal with evil elements in the society, because mild laws always provide opportunities for more crimes and thus create a sense of insecurity among the law-abiding people and, at the same time, creating new problems for the rulers.

In this connection it may be added with much regret that the so-called "Muslim States," duped by Western ideology, indirectly hold similar views as stated in the third category above. The very fact that they do not enforce nor do they intend to enforce the Qur'ānic Laws in their countries, though they are quite competent to do so at any moment to get rid of an ever-increasing wave of crime in their countries, provides an ample evidence of their disapproval of capital punishment as laid down in the Qur'ān for

certain major crimes. We have the example of Saudi Arabia before us which may fairly be called the Qur'ānic State as the Qur'ānic Laws are in force in that country and consequently it is the only country wherein dwell real peace and security as very few crimes take place there.

It may rightly be stressed that a citizen neither needs the progress marked by high industrialisation nor does he need the various amenities of life. He needs something more important than this. It is peace and security without which no stability is possible.

The problem now confronting us is: "Do we accept the Message as a whole?" We do not like the People of the Book taking a two-faced attitude to the Qur'ān, accepting or rejecting its Laws to suit our interests. Are we not following the historical evil example of the People of the Book who accepted that part of God's Message which suited them but rejected that which went against their wishes. Have we ever pondered over these verses of the Qur'ān? What do they mean to us?

(a) . . . He has chosen you (Muslims) and has imposed no difficulties on you in religion . . . (xxii. 78—Medina).

(b) Leave alone those who take their religion to be merely play and amusement and are deceived by the life of this world . . . (vi. 70—Mecca).

(c) Say : Shall I seek for Judge other than Allah, when He it is Who hath sent unto you the Book explained in detail . . . (vi. 114—Mecca).

(d) The Word of thy Lord doth find its fulfilment in truth and in justice : none can change His Words, for He is the one Who heareth and knoweth all (vi. 115—Mecca).

(e) We sent not an Apostle but to be obeyed in accordance with the Will of God . . . (iv. 64—Medina).

(f) And this is a Book (Qur'ān) which We have revealed as a blessing, so follow it and be righteous that ye may receive mercy (vi. 155—Mecca).

(g) . . . There is none that can alter the Words (and Decrees) of Allah . . . (vi. 34—Mecca).

(h) Has not the time arrived for the Believers that their hearts in all humility should engage in the remembrance of God and of the Truth which has been revealed (to them) and that they should not become like those to whom was given Revelation aforetime, but long ages passed over them and their hearts grew hard. For many among them are rebellious transgressors (lvii. 16—Medina).

(i) Behold this is the Word that distinguishes (Good from Evil) (lxxxvi. 13—Mecca).

It follows from the above that we, in the capacity of the Chosen People, are expected to hold fast to the entire Message that has been handed down to us. We have to accept and follow the entire Message.

For us are now left two alternatives each followed by its consequence : either accept and practise the entire Message and please Allah ; or accept it partially and please the West. But does not partial acceptance mean total rejection ?

The Muslims have put themselves in a precarious position on account of their flippant and inadvertant attitude to the Qur'ān. Do we believe that the Qur'ān is now the only Book of Guidance till the Day of Resurrection ? Or do we still await another Prophet and another Book ? But this is quite impossible in view of the loud proclamation of the Qur'ān : "This day have I perfected your religion and completed My Favours unto you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion" (v. 3.).

Now if the Muslims do not accept the Qur'ān as a whole, then what "Message" after that will they believe in ? These are the questions which the Muslims in general, and the heads of the Muslim States, in particular, must ponder over with a serious mind.

Fourth category : There are only a few others who rightly think that the Qur'ān is the Perfect Message and hence its Laws are Perfect. But their voice remains merely a voice and nothing more !

30

THE PAGANS WARNED

- (a) Are you Unbelievers (O Quraish !) better than they (Egyptians) ? Or have ye an immunity in the Sacred Books ?

Or do they say : "We acting together can defend ourselves" ? Soon will their multitudes be put to flight, and they will show their backs (liv. 43-45—Mecca).

- (b) But now that the Qur'ān has come, they reject it ; but soon will they know.

Already has Our Word been passed before (this) to Our Servants sent (by Us).

That they would certainly be assisted.

And that Our Forces . . . they surely must conquer.

So turn thou away from them for a little while.

And watch them (how they fare) and they soon shall see (how thou farest) !

Do they wish (indeed) to hurry on Our Punishment ?

But when it descends into the open space before them, evil will be the morning for those who were warned (and heeded not) ! (xxxvii. 170-177—Mecca).

- (c) And verily, for those who do wrong, there is another punishment besides this (lii. 47—Mecca).
- (d) But there. . . will be put to flight even a host of confederates (xxxviii. 11—Mecca).
- (e) Then leave Me alone with such as reject this Message : by degrees shall We punish them from directions they perceive not (lxviii. 44—Mecca).
- (f) Nay, We gave the good things of this life to these men and their fathers until the period grew long for them ; see they not that We gradually reduce the land (in their control) from its outlying borders ? Is it then they who will win ? (xxi. 44—Mecca).
- (g) And say : "Praise be to Allah, Who will show you His Portents so that ye shall know them . . . (xxvii. 93—Mecca).
- (h) Do they think that because We have granted them abundance of wealth and sons, We would hasten unto them on in every good ? Nay, they do not understand (xxiii. 55-56—Mecca).
- (i) Soon will We show them Our Signs in the (furthest) regions (of the earth) and in their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the Truth . . . (xli. 53—Mecca).
- (j) . . . And soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take (xxvi. 227—Mecca).
- (k) Say : "It may be that some of the events

which ye wish to hasten on may be (close) in your pursuit ! (xxvii. 72—Mecca).

- (l) . . . One day [Friday, 17 Ramadān 2] We shall seize you with a mighty onslaught : We will indeed (then) exact Retribution ! (xliv. 16—Mecca).

It should, particularly, be observed that all the above verses belong to the early Meccan Sūrahs revealed at a time when the Pagans' power was at its height and Islam merely consisted of a handful of poverty-stricken Muslims, desperately struggling for their very survival amidst the barbarian forces let loose against them. But there was a Force at work against them—such a Force which could outdo all their combined forces. However, being devoid of faith, they (the Pagans) failed to perceive such a Force and as such the Qur'ānic warnings then appeared to them ridiculous. Mad with jealousy, fury and egoism, they set aside the common human laws and rushed headlong in the persecution of the poor innocent Muslims of Mecca and thus making their lives intolerable.

Carefully going through the warnings, we find that time and again it was made plain to them that if they did not cease to molest the Muslims, then

- (1) The Muslims would definitely be assisted by God against them ;
- (2) Even their combined forces would not be

able to stand against the Muslims ;

(3) Their wealth, power and influence would soon decline ;

(4) They would be heavily punished by no other than the Muslims they persecuted and whom they considered insignificant ;

(5) Victory would ultimately crown the Muslims.

Islam was sure to make its headway in the distant regions of the earth and in their houses as well.

Great was the lesson which they could have learnt from these warnings, but they had little effect upon the exponents of polytheism, as they judged them in relation to the person of the Prophet rather than judge them in relation to his office. It is always hard to convince the people who believe in force only. So flatly ignoring this warning, they carried on their organised campaign of persecution against the Muslims.

Then happened what was promised them to happen. They lost the very first battle at Badr. The Pagans' main side was broken as their leading men were put to sword, despite their well-equipped great numbers. And the truth, "How oft, by God's Will, has a small force vanquished a big one" was once more confirmed.

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PAGANS WARNED AGAIN

- (a) . . . These saw with their own eyes twice their number. But God doth support with His aid whom He pleaseth. . . (iii. 13—Medina).
- (b) (O Unbelievers !) If ye prayed for victory and judgment, now hath the judgment come to you : if ye desist from (wrong), it will be best for you : if ye return (to the attack) so shall We. Not the least good will your forces be to you, even if they were multiplied : for verily God is with those who believe ! (viii. 19—Medina).
- (c) The Unbelievers spend their wealth to hinder (men) from the path of God, and so will they continue to spend ; but in the end they will have (only) regrets and sighs ; at length they will be overcome . . . (viii. 36—Medina).
- (d) Say to the Unbelievers, if (now) they desist (from Unbelief), their past would be forgiven them ; but if they persist, the punishment of those before them is already (a matter of warning to them) (viii. 38—Medina).
- (e) If they refuse, be sure that God is your Protector . . . (viii. 40—Medina).
- (f) Let not the Unbelievers think that they can

get the better (of the Godly) : they will never frustrate (them) (viii. 59—Medina).

- (g) Never think thou that the Unbelievers are going to frustrate (God's Plan) on earth; their abode is the fire,—and it is indeed an evil refuge ! (xxiv. 57—Medina).

The warnings given to the Pagans, prior to the Prophet's migration to Medina, had after all their effect on the plains of Badr where the enemy suffered heavy losses. Again they were warned to cease their hostilities to Islam and let the Muslims live in peace in their homes.

They were assured that the Muslims would never attack them unless they attacked the Muslims first. And this assurance came from no other than Allah Himself. They were warned against their ill-use of men and resources in an effort to subdue the Muslims, as they could never succeed to do so since the Muslims were assured of protection, aid and victory from God. They were warned that all their future attacks upon the Muslims would only meet with disasters resulting in their own ruin.

There was yet a great lesson for them to learn after their first defeat at Badr. But the war-mongering activities of the Pagans did not come to an end.

PAGANS WARNED YET AGAIN

- (a) Soon shall We cast terror into the hearts of the Unbelievers, for that they joined companions with God for which He had sent no authority . . . (iii. 151—Medina).
- (b) See they not that We gradually reduce the land (in their control) from its outlying borders? . . . (xiii. 41—Medina).
- (c) Their intention is to extinguish God's Light (by blowing) with their mouths: but God will complete (the revelation of) His Light, even though the Unbelievers may detest (it) (lxi. 8—Medina).
- (d) Fain would they extinguish God's Light with their mouth, but God will not allow but that His Light should be perfected, even though the Unbelievers may detest (it) (ix. 32—Medina).
- (e) Those who resist God and His Apostle will be humbled to dust, as were those before them; for We have already sent down clear Signs and the Unbelievers (will have) a humiliating penalty (lviii. 5—Medina).

The final warning came, declaring that all resistance to Islam would be ruthlessly put down, but the

Quraish paid little heed to it.

The defeat at Badr had made them more furious than ever before. Their war preparations now became more intensified and were guided more with the feeling of revenge rather than the feelings of old religious hatred. To speed up this objective, they made fervent appeals to other Pagan tribes to come to their aid in their task. The response from the other tribes was quick but it was the response guided more by the desire of plunder than the desire of real victory. Even the "believers in One God" (Jews) joined hands with the idolaters to crush the Children of Unity. In fact the idolaters, the Jews and the hypocrites formed a triple complicity against Islam.

The period between 2 H. and 9 H. was a period of great unrest for Islam. The enemy was hurrying on to put out the Light of God and God was equally hurrying on to strengthen and perfect His Light.

Events moved fast. Battles followed battles. At Uḥud the enemy numbering 3000 could hardly achieve anything worth mentioning. Then followed the Battle of the Trench when the Pagans with an army of 10,000 invaded Medina. God's Promise of help came to the Muslims. A violent wind blew for three days and nights uprooting all tents of the enemy, thus making their stay impossible, and they were obliged to retreat.

The vain struggles of the Pagans now for the first time made them realise that Islam was something to be reckoned. In the sixth year of the Hijrah, the Treaty of Hudaibiyah was signed. This Treaty proved one of the greatest blessings for Islam. The wars were so far a great obstacle in the way of Islam. But now they were over and both the parties were free to meet each other with the result that in two years following the signing of the Treaty, more people accepted Islam than the total number of all the previous converts in the period of nineteen years preceding the signing of the Treaty.

But the truce was broken by the Quraish and as such the Prophet marched to Mecca with an army of 10,000. The Muslims met no resistance and so without bloodshed Mecca fell and with it crumbled the power of the Pagans. God fulfilled His Promise: "When God's succour and triumph come, and thou seest mankind entering the religion of God (Islam) in troops."

DEFEAT OF THE PAGANS PROPHESED

- (a) O Apostle! rouse the Believers to the fight. If there are twenty amongst you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred; if a hundred, they will vanquish a thousand of the Unbelievers: for these are a people without understanding (viii. 65—Medina).
- (b) Fight them, and Allah will punish them by your hands, cover them with shame, help you (to victory) over them; heal the hearts of the Believers (ix. 14—Medina).
- (c) They (unbelievers) will do you no harm, barring a trifling annoyance; if they come out to fight you, they will show you their backs and no help shall they get (iii. 111—Medina).

When the enemy failed to put out the Light of Truth by malicious means, they resolved to put it out by means of force. As a result of this Islam had to defend herself for her very survival and in this she was promised of Divine Aid, though the Muslims were far more fewer than the idolaters. However, they were reminded, "How oft by God's Will hath a small force vanquished a big one?" On the battle-fields the ratio of the Believers to the Unbelievers

was fixed as 10 to 100 and from the accounts of the Islamic conquests in various parts of the world, we find how a small minority had an upper hand over the majority. The facts and figures of all the major Islamic battles fought between 625 C.E. and 1700 C.E. in the Mediterranean regions, North Africa, Arabia, Persia and India justify the above statements.

WILL MAN REACH THE MOON?

- (a) It is We Who have set out the Zodiacal Signs in the heavens, and made them fair-seeming to (all) beholders.
- (b) And (moreover) We have guarded them from every evil spirit accursed : outcast devil.
- (c) But any that gains a hearing by stealth is pursued by a flaming fire bright (to see) (xv. 16-18—Mecca).
- (d) God said, "Get you down with enmity between yourselves. *On earth will be your dwelling place and your means of livelihood for a time.*"
- (e) He said, "Therein shall you live and therein shall you die ; but from it shall you be taken out at last" (vii, 24-25—Mecca).
- (f) From the (earth) did We create you, and into it shall We return you, and from it shall We bring you out once again (xx. 55—Mecca).
- (g) It is He Who hath made you as viceroys of the earth . . . (vi. 165—Mecca).
- (h) O ye assembly of Jinns and men ! If it be ye can pass beyond the zones of the heavens and the earth, pass ye ! Not without authority

shall ye be able to pass.

Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny?

On you will be sent (O ye evil ones twain!) a flame of fire (to burn) and a smoke (to choke): no defence will ye have (lv. 33, 34, 35—Medina).

(i) And He hath made subject to you the sun and the moon, both diligently pursuing their course; and the Night and the Day hath He (also) made subject to you (xiv. 33—Mecca).

(j) Behold thy Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vicegerent on earth . . ." (ii. 30—Medina).

(k) . . . He knows you well when *He brings you out of the earth* . . . (liii. 32—Mecca).

(l) And (the Jinn who has listened to the Qur'ān said) we pried into the secrets of heaven; but we found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires.

We used, indeed, to sit there in (hidden) stations, to (steal) a hearing; but any who listens now will find a flaming fire watching him in ambush (lxxii. 8-9—Mecca).

(m) And We have (from of old) adorned the lowest heaven with Lamps, and We have made such (Lamps as) missiles to drive away the Evil Ones, and have prepared for them the Penalty of the Blazing Fire (lxvii. 5—Mecca).

(n) Or have they the dominion of the heavens and earth and all between? If so, let them mount up with the ropes . . . (xxxviii. 11—Mecca).

(o) And We adorned the lower heaven with lights, and (provided it) with guard. Such is the Decree of (Him) the Exalted in Might, Full of Knowledge (xli. 12—Mecca).

(p) Or have they a ladder, by which they can (climb up to heaven and) listen (to its secrets)? Then let (such a) listener of their produce a manifest proof (lii. 38—Mecca).

(q) It is We Who have placed you with authority on earth, and provided you therein with livelihood . . . (vii. 10—Mecca).

(r) He knows what enters within the earth and what comes forth out of it, what comes down from heaven and what mounts up to it . . . (lvii. 4—Medina).

(s) Have We not made the earth (as a place) to draw together the living and the dead (lxxvii. 25-26—Mecca).

(t) Or, who has made the earth firm to live in; made rivers in its midst . . . (xxvii. 61—Mecca).

Space conquest is an interesting and burning topic of today and hence it needs fairly wide comments in the light of the interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses quoted above.

As everyone knows the space race is on between two Great Powers and each is trying to emulate the other. Even the smaller nations have surprisingly entered this race of the great "out yonder". To human speculation the space conquest now appears to be

within the reach of Man after his several recent successful flights round the earth's orbit. To many this success of man does not exclude the possibility of reaching the moon in the very near future. Flights to the moon have already been planned.

To man the moon has always been an object of attraction, superstitions and inquiry. Even the Holy Prophet was asked about the different phases of the moon by some Companions including the distinguished one, Mu'adh bin Jabal and to this a reply came through the revelation saying, "They ask thee of the new moons. Say, they are fixed seasons for mankind and for pilgrimage." This answer adequately satisfied the questioners in view of the Muslim practice of following the lunar calendar. Nothing more was added than what has been quoted above, but it was left to the quest of man.

Since then much has been discovered by the astronomers concerning the various planets, and they are now able to forecast correctly even the time and place of the occurrence of the solar or lunar eclipse.

Now the point is whether man will be able to reach the moon or any other higher planet? What is the attitude of the Qur'ān towards such questions? Let us examine it in the light of the Qur'ān.

In this connection it may be added that we can-

not sit quiet like silent spectators and watch for results. We possess the Glorious Book and we must endeavour to penetrate into it in order to find the answer of this burning problem.

After carefully going through the above Qur'ānic quotations, we arrive at the following conclusions:

- (1) After his expulsion from the heaven, it was decreed to put man on the earth and not on any other planet as the word *al-ard* in the verses means the earth. *Al-Qamar* meaning the moon is quite different from *al-ard* meaning the earth.
- (2) Man has to live his life only on the earth.
- (3) He dies on the earth and is buried under the soil of the earth.
- (4) He will eventually be taken out from the earth. Thus, according to the Qur'ān, to put it in a nutshell, his life, death and rise are to occur only on the earth. Now suppose that man succeeded in reaching the moon and accidentally died on it, then what is the meaning of verse 25 of chapter vii.?
- (5) As far as "this" life is concerned, no other planet save earth can provide man with the means of his livelihood. In other words, man's life is possible only on the earth.
- (e) Man has been made the viceroy of the earth

and not of any other planet. His attempts to take control of any other planet would mean transgression on his part.

(7) The sun and the moon are of great service to man. The sun provides man with heat and light without which no life is possible. The sun and the moon together cause the tides and other vital atmospheric changes useful to man. But all this is governed by the fixed laws of nature which a man is quite powerless to alter. Nevertheless, he has been gifted with the faculty of understanding and thus using them to his own advantage. It is in this sense that the heavenly bodies are made subject to man. By no means can he gain mastery over the planets and cause confusion by carrying out nuclear tests on them as he has been doing on the earth under the pretext of "peaceful research".

(8) The lowest heaven is too well guarded to be penetrated either by man or Jinn. Refer to verses 6 to 10 of chapter xxxvii. The moon is in the lowest heaven.

(9) The flight power of the Jinn is too great even to be conceived by a human mind. In the words of the Qur'ān itself :

He (King Solomon) said : You chiefs ! which

of you can bring me her throne before they come to me in submission ?

Said an 'Ifrīt of the Jinns : "I will bring it to thee before thou risest from thy council : indeed I have full strength for the purpose and may be trusted."

Said one who had knowledge of the Book : "I will bring it to thee within the twinkling of an eye !" Then when he saw it placed firmly before him, he said, "This is by the grace of my Lord . . ." (xxvii. 38-40—Mecca).

The throne of the Queen of Sheba was instantly transported and then transformed as desired by Solomon.

Such is the power of the Jinns and yet in the words of the Jinns, "We had sought the heaven, but had found it filled with strong warders and meteors." Man must ponder over this !

In my opinion in Sūrah lv. the thought expressed in verse 33 continues in verse 35. The interspersions of verse 34 meaning : "Which is it of the favours of your Lord that you deny ?" does not in any way interrupt the continuity of the thought as this interspersions occurs thirty-one times through the Sūrah and which has mainly been introduced to remind man of God's innumerable favours upon him.

Man and Jinn have completely been encircled by the master-plan of God and as such neither of them

can escape from God's Kingdom which stretches all through the earth and heavens. Nor can any one of them trespass the space boundaries and place himself on another planet. Their efforts to do so will bear the consequences as laid down in verse 35.

The phrase "except with (Our) Sanction" may be referred to the entry and exit of the authorised angels on duty, ascension of Jesus, the son of Mary, and his descension which is still to follow and both the ascension and descension of our Holy Prophet when he went on the Mi'rāj and which occasion is still commemorated by the Muslims every year on 27 Rajab throughout the world.

Before ending this topic it will not be out of place to add some further comments to the interpretation of the second part of verse 33 reading: "You (Jinn and man) will never penetrate them save with (Our) Sanction."

The revelation, it should be remembered, came nearly 1400 years ago when the idea of man's flight was considered quite inconceivable, if not impossible. From the words of the above verse, it becomes quite obvious to a discerning mind that man's attempt to penetrate the space in future is hinted. The very mention of man's penetration with that of the Jinn is a sufficient proof of this hint. The flight power of the Jinn is far more superior to that of man as

the former have been gifted with such power as opposed to man who has to make his flights with the aid of the flying machines which he has invented after many a hard trial. Man may invent yet more faster rockets but never will he be able to outreach the Jinn in flight power. So how can man achieve by his flight that which the Jinn cannot achieve?

HYPOCRITES CURSED

- (a) The Hypocrites—they think they are overreaching God, but He will overreach them... (iv. 142—Medina).
- (b) The Hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire: no helper wilt thou find for them (iv. 145—Medina).
- (c) Let not their wealth nor their (following in) sons dazzle thee: in reality God's Plan is to punish them with these things in this life and that their souls may perish in their (very) denial of God (ix. 55—Medina).
- (d) Among them (Hypocrites) are men who molest the Prophet and say, He is (all) ear. Say, He listens to what is best for you: he believes in God, has faith in the Believers, and is a Mercy to those of you who believe. But those who molest the Apostle will have a grievous penalty (ix. 61—Medina).
- (e) The Hypocrites are afraid lest a Sūrah should be sent down concerning them showing them what is (really passing) in their hearts. Say: Mock ye! But verily God will bring to light all that ye fear (should be revealed) (ix. 64—Medina).

- (f) If thou ask them, they declare (with emphasis): We were only talking idly and in play. Say: Was it at God, and His Signs, and His Apostle, that ye were mocking? (ix. 65—Medina).
- (g) ... If they (Hypocrites) repent, it will be best for them, but if they turn back (to their evil ways), God will punish them with a grievous penalty in this life and the Hereafter ... (ix. 74—Medina).
- (h) Certain of the desert Arabs round about you are Hypocrites as well as (desert Arabs) among the Medina folk: they are obstinate in hypocrisy: thou knowest them not: We know them: twice shall We punish them: and in addition shall they be sent to a grievous Penalty (ix. 101—Medina).
- (i) They (Hypocrites) shall have a curse on them; wherever they are found, they shall be seized and slain (without mercy) (xxxiii. 61—Medina).
- (j) It is equal to them whether thou pray for their forgiveness or not. God will not forgive them Truly God guides not rebellious transgressor (lxiii. 6—Medina).

An open enemy is always easier to deal with than a hidden enemy (hypocrite) who is obviously a wolf in sheep's skin. Such a person is always a source of constant danger to society as well as government.

The Hypocrites, because of their habitual vicious

nature, always lie in wait for an opportunity to pour out their deadly saliva into the healthy body of the society. The Qur'ān shows no mercy to such useless people and hence time and again it exposes their evil behaviour and malacious designs.

The Hypocrites came in the picture after the Prophet's historical migration to Medina where Islam was destined to lay deep the foundation of all her future hopes. The Beacon of Truth was to be installed firmly and the Light thereof was to be carried to every nook and corner of the earth. However, before the Migration, the Hypocrites like the Pagans thought Islam as a "Passing Show" worth little notice and speculated of its disappearance altogether. But, contrary to this, things proved otherwise and hence they now strengthened their activities to combat this Force with all the means at their disposal.

These people, therefore, under their organised sinister system, provoked trouble for Islam in its critical days, and as a result of this Islam had to suffer more at their hands rather than at the hands of the Pagans. And it is equally true to say that more vital strength of Islam was used to subdue them than to subdue her open enemies. In fact these were the people who, taking an unfair advantage of the death of the Prophet, soon reverted to their old tactics and were thus responsible for creating one of the most

serious problems that Islam has ever been called upon to face. But fortunately the evil tide soon subsided and the Hypocrites once again failed in their scheme, as the curse of God was upon them.

The Qur'ān predicted their evil designs and the Holy Prophet was time and again informed of their secret plots. The above verses make an interesting study when read with a detailed commentary.

Most of the quotations concerning the Hypocrites come from Sūrah ix. titled "Taubah" as this Sūrah deals at length with their characteristic tactics. Accordingly we can group the Hypocrites as under :

- (1) Stubborn hypocrites : they are always bent upon revenge whether justified or unjustified. 'Abdullah bin Ubayy is a typical historical example of this category. Their character is marked with lies, pretexts, false vows and constant breach of promises. They change their sides and faith to serve their personal interests. Theirs is an entirely hopeless case.
- (2) Mild hypocrites : they mixed evil with good but, after realising their follies, cast off their garb of hypocrisy. Pretexts, false vows and breach of promise go with them but once good sense prevails, they improve perfectly.
- (3) Hypocrites who are exactly on the midway between Belief and Disbelief: they may either

mix with the first category and ruin themselves or mix with the second category and save themselves.

(4) Hypocrites who are like bitter pills coated with sugar. Of all the types, this is the most dangerous. one. They are most cowardly in their attacks upon the Cause of Islam. They strike at the unity of the Muslims. It is this type that the Muslims should particularly be most cautious of now as at any time before. We can safely put the Qadianis in this category.

But the Judgment of God has already been passed. According to the Qur'ān, the Polytheists and Hypocrites shall never be pardoned and the Hypocrites will dwell at the lower bottom of Hell than their "more fortunate colleagues"—the idolaters.

HYPOCRITES EXPOSED

- (a) They (Hypocrites) will present their excuses to you when ye return to them. Say thou: "Present no excuses: we shall not believe you: God hath already informed us of the true state of matters concerning you: it is your actions that God and His Apostle will observe...."
- (b) They will swear to you (Muslims) by God when ye return to them, that ye may leave them alone. So leave them alone: for they are an abomination. . .
- (c) They will swear unto you that ye may be pleased with them. But if ye are pleased with them, God is not pleased with those who disobey (ix. 94-96—Medina).

When the Prophet led an expedition to Tabūk, the Hypocrites declined to go under one pretext or another, and the Prophet did not take their attitude seriously. They did not then flatly refuse to go as in the past, owing to the strong position of the Muslims and as such they sought a cowardly refuge under various pretexts.

But such an exemption, if ignored, would have

had serious repercussions on all future expeditions that Islam was yet to lead. One cannot even imagine as to what amount of damage would have such exemptions caused to Islam, had God not exposed their guiles to the Muslims. But before the Muslims returned to Medina, they were already informed of the real object of the Hypocrites' refusal to join the Muslims.

It is interesting to note that soon after their return, the incidents happened exactly in the same manner as prophesied.

37

HYPOCRITES SEPARATED FROM MUSLIMS

God will not leave the Believers in the state in which ye are now, until He separates what is evil from what is good. Nor will He disclose to you the secrets of the Unseen. But He chooses of His Apostles (for the purpose) whom He pleases. So believe in God and His Apostles : and if ye believe and do right, ye have a reward without measure (iii. 179—Medina).

The suggested separation took place in two ways :

1. By the Holy Wars when the Hypocrites deserted the Muslims and were thus exposed in their true colours.
2. Through Revelation on various occasions when their designs were disclosed to them.

The early history of Islam shows that Hypocrites were sorted out one by one. There were some who improved their conduct but there were others who still persisted in their rebellious transgression and were thus justly put to death.

The evil has again mixed up with good and the

whole mass has become ruthlessly complex. But the evil could be separated from good even today by the Qur'ānic remedy of "Belief in God and His Messengers and eschewing of evil". But despite this earth-wide proclamation of the Qur'ān, a person advocating such a remedy is branded as a man with utopian theories in the modern "civilised" world interested in the material value only. This fallacy obviously prevents the Muslims from reaping the tangible benefits which the Qur'ān promises them.

HYPOCRITES FAILED THE JEWS

- (a) Hast thou not observed the Hypocrite say to their misbelieving brethren among the People of the Book?—"If ye are expelled, we too will go out with you, and we will never hearken to anyone in your affair; and if ye are attacked (in fight), we will help you." But God is witness that they are indeed liars.
- (b) If they are expelled, never will they go out with them; and if they are attacked (in fight) they will never help them; and if they do help them, they will turn their backs; so they will receive no help (lix. 11-12—Medina).

'Abdullah bin Ubayy and other leading Hypocrites sent a message of assurance to the Jewish tribe of Banī Naḍīr saying that they would leave Medina if the latter were expelled from it and that they would aid them in their fight against the Muslims.

But history proves that these Hypocrites never went with the people of Banī Naḍīr when they were expelled from Medina as their presence in Medina was a menace to the general peace. Nor they ever helped the Jews in their fight against the Muslims, as the Qur'ān prophesies.

ABU 'ĀMIR'S COMPLICITY EXPOSED

And there are those who put up a mosque by way of mischief and infidelity—to disunite the Believers—and in preparation for one (Abū 'Āmir) who warred against God and His Apostle aforetime. They will indeed swear that their intention is nothing but good; but God doth declare that they are certainly liars (ix. 107—Medina).

Abū 'Āmir, a highly respected monk, was well versed in both the Law and the Gospel and always spoke well for the Prophet prior to the Prophet's migration to Medina. But with the arrival of the Prophet at Medina, Abū 'Āmir's importance suddenly declined as few people now flocked to him. Thus overwhelmed with jealousy, he joined hands with the Pagans of Mecca and fought against Islam at Uhud and Hunain. At Uhud, it was he who made a start of the battle by shooting an arrow at the Muslims. But nowhere did success come to him and so he had to run away to Syria with the hope of getting the Roman aid against the Muslims. From there he wrote to his colleagues to build an opposition-mosque at Qubā with the desperate hope of creating disunion

among the Muslims. Upon his advice, the mosque was built and it is this Mosque of Mischief that the Qur'ān refers to.

A mosque is a house of God if it is built with good intention, but the same mosque turns out to be a house of mischief when built with evil intention. It is true to say that the existence of that mosque would have given a serious blow to the unity of the Muslims, had not God informed the Muslims of the evil designs of the builders. And it is against such mosques that the Muslims are warned to be on the alert. Such a mosque deserves to be demolished. But today do we not find a number of sectarian mosques built in opposition to one another and which therefore, in the words of the Qur'ān, "disunite the Believers"?

THE JEWS ARE CURSED: ISRAEL WILL DISAPPEAR

- (a) . . . But what is the reward for those among you (Jews) who behave like this but disgrace in this life?—and on the Day of Judgment they shall be consigned to the most grievous penalty . . . (ii. 85—Medina).
- (b) . . . For them (Jews) there is disgrace in this world, and in the Hereafter a heavy punishment (v. 44—Medina).
- (c) Before this We wrote in the Psalms, after the Message (given to Moses): My servants the righteous shall inherit the earth (xxi. 105—Mecca).

The Jews were once the Chosen People of God to carry out the Divine Ideal but they broke the Covenant and time and again disobeyed God and thus invited the Curse of God upon themselves. Since then, this nation is scattered all over the world at different intervals and has never enjoyed permanent security and stability. They were released from the tortures of the Pharaohs and were led to the land "flowing with milk and honey". But every favour of

God was returned with an act of disobedience.

Theirs is a long sad tale. It is a tale of disasters followed by deliverances, and this cycle has been going on since the Great Curse. In their "settled" homes they were overthrown by the mighty power of Assyria in 722 B.C. and Sennacherib carried off as many as 200,000 Jews as captives. About a century later the Chaldeans followed the Assyrians and in 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and carried away the Jews to exile in Babylonia. It then appeared as if the Hebrew race was wiped out but it still survives to suffer the Disgrace. To their "good luck" Babylonia was conquered by the Persians and the King Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to Palestine and build it. They rallied again only to be conquered by Alexander the Great and later on by Rome. Again, during the Caliphate of 'Umar the Romans were overthrown in Palestine by the Muslims.

For over 1000 years the Jews suffered exile in various parts of the world. Exploitation went with them wherever they went. In Germany anti-Jewish prejudice reached to such a height that a slogan went on: "Get rid of the Jews and the Communists and the natural genius of the German people will reconstruct its fortunes." This resulted in more deaths of the Jews than the total number of deaths at the combined hands of both Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar.

But the cycle of disasters and deliverances for the Jews must continue to fulfil the Prophecy of Disgrace for them in this world. So in 1948 the Big Powers came to the aid of the Jews like King Cyrus in the past. Israel once again made its appearance on the map of the world and the scattered Jews have been once again settled in it. During the short period of fifteen years they have quickly acquired, as in the past, a position of wealth and trade and prosperity. But the everlasting Big Curse still hovers over this nation. Will the new Kingdom of Israel survive? The answer can be found in the Qur'ānic prophecy.

But is it not true to say that the underlying motive of the West in creating this State was to pacify her old revenge of the Crusades? What historical justification can the existence of this State have? But it may be borne in mind that those who played an active role in creating this State against the wishes of the entire Muslim world will eventually bear disastrous consequences at the very hands of the Jews. History repeats itself! By no means could the mass indignation of so many Muslims be ignored. However, a man from the West may arise and in true Christian spirit may declare like Hitler, "Should the Jew, with the help of his Marxist faith, prevail over the peoples of this world, his crown will be the burial-wreath of humanity, and this planet will once more,

as it did millions of years ago, drift through the ether devoid of life. Eternal Nature ruthlessly avenges the transgression of her laws. I believe, therefore, that I am acting today in the spirit of the Almighty Creator. In fighting the Jews I am defending the work of the Lord!"

Now we may quote one more verse :

It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you (Jews), but if you repeat (the crime) We shall repeat (the punishment). . . .

But for the Jews there is no lesson to be learnt even from their own past. They will never cease to revert to their old racial habit of mischief-making and hence the punishment will be repeated as the Qur'ān warns them. Sooner or later the State of Israel must disappear !

EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM MEDINA PROPHESED

Truly, if the Hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease, and those who stir up sedition in the City desist not, We shall certainly stir thee up against them : then will they not be able to stay in it as thy neighbours for any length of time (xxxiii. 60 — Medina).

Here the reference is to the Jewish tribe of Banī Naḍīr on whose account the Muslims had to suffer a lot, both during peace and war periods. Their frequent plots to expel the peaceful Muslims from Medina did not stop though they were time and again warned to refrain from their malicious activities, but all in vain. Then the warning had its effect. At the command of the Prophet the whole Jewish locality was surrounded by the Muslims. The Jews resisted for some days but ultimately gave in. Though their conduct deserved a heavy punishment, the Prophet, upon their own desire, let them leave Medina for good with all their property. Carrying their goods on 600 camels, they journeyed to Khaibar and settled

there with their other tribes. Before leaving, however, they even pulled down their houses so as to make them unfit for the Muslims to live.

THE HEBREW GREED EXPOSED

- (a) Thou wilt indeed find them (Jews), of all people, most greedy of life,—even more than the idolaters ; each one of them wishes he could be given a life of a thousand years : but the grant of such life will not save him from (due) punishment, for God sees well all that they do (ii. 96—Medina).
- (b) The Jews say : “God’s hand is tied up.” Be *their* tied up and be they accursed for the (blasphemy) they utter . . . (v. 67—Medina).

The Jews are typically characterised by greed wherever they may be. Greediness is a vice that encourages unhealthy hoarding and exploitation resulting in class-hatred. Such people, eventually, suffer at the hands of those whom they exploit. The story of the recent expulsion of the Jews from the East European countries is too fresh to need any further comments. It is true that Jewishness and greed go hand in hand as prophesies the Qur’ân.

THE COWARDICE OF THE JEWS

They will not fight you (even) together, except in fortified townships, or from behind the walls. Strong is their fighting (spirit) amongst themselves : thou wouldst think they are united, but their hearts are divided : that is because they are a people devoid of wisdom ! (lix. 14—Medina).

History proves that the Jews never combined their forces and came out to fight against the Muslims. Each locality or village preferred to defend itself and was never bold enough to go to the aid of another surrounded Jewish village. Thus no battle did they fight which they did not lose against the Muslims.

Their history might have been different had there been unity among them. But how on earth is this possible in view of the Great Curse engulfing them from every quarter ?

ENMITY AMONG THE JEWS

- (a) Then woe to those who write the Book with their own hands, and then say: "This is from God." To traffic with it for a miserable price! Woe to them for what their hands do write, and for the gain they make thereby (ii. 79—Medina).
- (b) But because of their breach of their Covenant We cursed them, and made their hearts grow hard: they change the words from their (right) places and forget a good part of the Message that was sent them, nor wilt thou cease to find them—barring a few—ever bent on (new) deceits . . . (v. 14—Medina).
- (c) . . . But the revelation that cometh to thee from God increaseth in most of them their obstinate rebellion and blasphemy. Amongst them We have placed enmity and hatred till the Day of Judgment. Every time they kindle the fire or war, God doth extinguish it; but they (ever) strive to do mischief on earth. And God loveth not those who do mischief (v. 67—Medina).

The hostility of the Jews to Muḥammad is in no way different from their hostility to Jesus, whom they

plotted to kill but God saved him from their treacherous hands and raised him unto Himself with his body and soul. They ought to have honoured the Covenant and accepted the Teaching of Jesus who merely confirmed that which they possessed. Similarly, in terms of the same Covenant, they ought to have, likewise, accepted the Teaching of Muḥammad who, like Jesus, confirms that which they possess. But "As often as a Messenger came unto them with that which their souls desired not (they became rebellious). Some (of them) they denied and some they slew."

Time and again they broke the Covenant and played with the Scripture. The Rabbis changed words from their context to suit the purpose of their hostility to the two top-ranking Prophets of God, viz. Jesus and Muḥammad. Worse than this, they wrote the Scripture with their own hands and declared it to be by the Word of God. Transgression, deceit, treachery and war-mongering are the main characteristics of the Jewish race, as aptly described by the Qur'ān. God has thus caused enmity and hatred among them till the Day of Resurrection.

SQUIBBLES BETWEEN THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTIANS

The Jews say : "The Christians have naught (to stand) upon"; and the Christians say : "The Jews have naught (to stand) upon." Yet they (profess to) study the (same) Book like unto their word is what those say who know not, but God will judge between them in their quarrel on the Day of Judgment (ii. 113--Medina).

The old religious dispute between the Jews and the Christians will never end as the Qur'ān prophesies. It may be added that despite the long research carried out so extensively both in Law and Gospel, no agreement has so far been reached between the two contending sides. The position remains the same as at any time before. And the dispute will go on and on till the Day of Resurrection, as the Qur'ān says.

ENMITY AMONG THE CHRISTIANS PROPHESED

From those, too, who call themselves Christians, We did take a Covenant, but they forgot a good part of the Message that was sent to them : so We estranged them, with enmity and hatred between the one and the other, to the Day of Judgment and soon will God show them what it is they have done (v.15—Medina).

The various Covenants mentioned in the Qur'ān were made with the peoples at different intervals through the Prophets. Each Prophet had agreed to the Covenant with the consent of his people. In the words of the Qur'ān, "When Allah made (His) Covenant with the Prophets, (He said), Behold that which I have given you of the Scripture and knowledge. And afterwards there will come unto you a Messenger conforming that which you possess. You shall believe in him and you shall help him." He said : "Do you agree and will you take up My burden (which I lay upon you) in this (matter)?" They answered : We agree. He said : "Then bear you witness. I will

be a witness with you."

One of the main clauses of the Covenant was "believe in My Apostles". But against the Christians the Qur'ān complains, "And when there comes unto them a Messenger (Muḥammad) from Allah, conforming that which they possess, a party of those who have received the Scripture fling the Scripture of Allah behind their backs as if they knew not."

For the breach of the Covenant, the enmity among the various Christian sects has been stirred up and which will last till the Day of Resurrection.

It may be recalled that the Arabic equivalent of the Christians is "Naṣāra," meaning the helpers. But history proves otherwise. Only God knows how much Christian blood has been shed by Christians themselves!

CLAIMS OF THE JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

- (a) Never will the Jews or the Christians be satisfied with thee unless thou follow their form of religion. Say : "The Guidance of God,—that is the (only) Guidance. . ." (ii. 120—Medina).
- (b) They say : "Become Jews or Christians if ye would be guided to (salvation)." Say thou : "Nay ! (I would rather) the Religion of Abraham the True, and he joined not gods with God" (ii. 135—Medina).
- (c) (Both) the Jews and the Christians say : "We are sons of God, and His beloved. Say : "Why then doth He punish you for your sins ? Nay, ye are but men,—of the men He hath created . . ." (v. 20—Medina).

Despite their blasphemous utterances, both the Jews and the Christians claim that they are rightly guided and with this presumptuous claim they, mellifluously invite the Muslims to their respective religions though the Muslims are on the right path of guidance. In fact, the Jews and the Christians are the people who received the Scripture earlier than the Muslims and as such they must first settle their basic

religious differences and then come out to invite the Muslims to their creeds.

Those Muslims who take either the Jews or the Christians as their friends in preference to the Muslims must ponder over the above verses. The implication of the verses is equally true now as it was any time before. However, it should be stressed that the march of time cannot change the Word of God.

48

ACCEPTANCE OF ISLAM BY THE
QURAISH CHIEFS PROPHESED

It may be that God will grant love (and friendship) between you and those whom ye (now) hold as enemies, for God has power (over all things); and God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (lx. 7—Medina).

The Muslims had sufficient reason to hate the idolaters at whose hands they had suffered innumerable tortures and their hatred justifiably ran high particularly against the chiefs of the Quraish who were instrumental for all this big trouble. At this juncture an address is made to the Muslims in which they are foretold of the acceptance of Islam by the chiefs of the Quraish. In view of the ceaseless cut-throat hostilities between either side, it was a prophecy which to a human mind was unlikely to be fulfilled. But it should be remembered that it was the prophecy of God Almighty. With the conquest of Mecca, the chiefs like Abū Sufyān, Sahl bin 'Umar, Ḥakīm bin Ḥazzām and 'Ikrimah bin Abū Jahl and other notable arch-enemies of Islam even-

tually realised the futility of opposing the forces of Truth and thus willingly accepted Islam. All hostilities ceased and the unhappy past was forgotten at the moment they came within the fold of Islam. It is the acceptance of Islam by the notable chiefs that was foretold and the prophecy was duly fulfilled within the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. The implication of the verse holds true for all times.

49

WARS WITH PERSIA AND ROME PROPHESED

Say to the desert Arabs who lagged behind : "Ye shall be summoned (to fight) against a people given to vehement war : then shall ye fight, or they shall submit. Then if ye show obedience, God will grant you a goodly reward, but if ye turn back as ye did before, He will punish you with a grievous Penalty" (xlvi. 16—Medina).

The prophecy is in respect of the wars with the Persian and Byzantine Empires.

The desert Arabs were accordingly summoned in due course to fight the then two mighty nations of Persia and Rome. They were till now ignored and despised by Rome and Persia, but due to the Islamic teaching they suddenly achieved a position which still remains unparalleled in the history of the world.

The Arabs, in spite of their comparatively small numbers and poor equipment, marched from their borders to join issue with the two most powerful and advanced nations of the world. The bedouins feeding on dates and milk of the she-camels suddenly

became chivalrous soldiers to whom fear of death and retreat were alike unknown.

The period of the Caliphate was the heroic age of Islam and it reached its zenith in the days of Hārūn al-Rashīd. The Persian Empire, already weakened by the conquests of Hercules, fell an easy prey to the Muslims. Then they turned to the north and after various successful battles curbed the power of Rome in Syria, Iraq and Egypt. They then diverted their entire energies to capture Constantinople, the stronghold of Christendom and an iron wall to their penetration in southern Europe. Constantinople was again and again besieged by the forces of Islam till it fell in 1453 C.E.

In this connection it may be remarked that the aim of Islamic conquests was not limited to extending the boundaries as the Western historians allege, but they had another nobler aim of far-reaching importance. In the capacity of the Chosen People of God they had and have their obligation to the world for spreading the Ideal of God and thus bringing spiritual, cultural and social benefits of the Ideal within the reach of the conquered. And it is obvious that this could never have been possible without political domination.

The conquering Muslims never imposed Islam upon the conquered as Charlemagne imposed Chris-

tianity upon Saxony, Bohemia and Lombardy. Even as victors they never forgot to obey the Qur'ānic commandment: "There is no compulsion in religion: truth stands out clear from error."

With the overthrow of Byzantine sovereignty in the north-east of Arabia by Islam and with her fast penetration in the south-west of Europe, the West became alarmed with apprehension of the political domination by the crescent. The cry went round Europe, "Deliver the Holy City from the foe." But political aims and gains lurked behind this fervent religious zeal and fanaticism.

So the long and terrible struggle began between the Cross and the Crescent in 1098 C.E. and ended in 1291 C.E. Thus the struggle to rescue Palestine dragged on for two centuries. The interesting story of the Crusades and their failures must be read elsewhere in detail. Nevertheless, there is one important fact which must be emphasised here. Had the Crusades been successful, their leaders would have, by no means, remained satisfied with the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, but they would have carried out their incursions far beyond the gates of Jerusalem and would have thus imposed Christianity on the distant peoples of Asia. In this case the political and religious history of the South-West Asian countries might have been quite different today. Hinduism

and Buddhism exist today, and for their existence both must thank Islam. Undoubtedly, the question of her survival predominantly dominated Islam in warding off the Crusaders and thus checking their further penetration into Asia. Islam, therefore, indirectly helped the other two main religions of Asia.

50

DISBELIEVERS PUNISHED IN
THIS WORLD TOO

- (a) Those who reject Our Signs, We shall gradually visit them with punishment, in ways they perceive not.
- (b) Respite will I grant unto them: for My Scheme is strong and unfailing (vii. 182-183—Mecca).
- (c) . . . But the Unbelievers,—never will disaster cease to seize them for their (ill) deeds, or to settle close to their homes, until the promise of God come to pass, for verily, God will not fail in His promise (xiii. 31—Mecca).
- (d) Those who reject Faith will not cease to be in doubt concerning (Revelation) until the Hour (of Judgment) comes suddenly upon them or there comes to them the Penalty of a Day of Disaster (xxii. 55—Medina).
- (e) . . . But no change with thou find in God's way (of dealing) : no turning off wilt thou find in God's way (of dealing) (xxxv. 43—Mecca).
- (f) Do they not travel through the earth, and see what was the End of those before them (who did evil) ? God brought utter destruction on them, and similar (fates await) those who reject God (xlvii. 10—Medina).

- (g) Those who resist God and His Apostle will be among those most humiliated (lviii. 20—Medina).

It has been the never-failing practice of God to punish the Disbelievers in this world with a promise of heavier punishment to follow in the Hereafter. If we trace the history of the disbelieving nations, we learn the truth that they never enjoyed peace and prosperity for a long period save under the suzerainty of a people of Faith, and when this did not come forth, they either suffered disasters caused by the internal strifes or natural calamities. And in case of the overthrow of the suzerainty of the People of Faith by the people without faith, the latter must then be prepared to face the natural calamities. In any event, the promise of God must be fulfilled.

To give not too distant historical examples : The Persians, despite their great strength, could not hold long against the Byzantines and later on against the Muslims. Similarly, the Hindus of India could do nothing against the Crescent invasions on India which ultimately resulted in the suzerainty of the Muslims lasting for nearly one thousand years.

Now in the light of the past experiences which clearly support the theme of the above verses, we can, with certainty, say that Communism, even with the so-called "promise of plenty for all," is bound to meet

with disaster in the long run as it is deep-dyed with atheism which reduces its follower to merely an animal. The Muslims and the Christians, as the Peoples of Faith, have an important part to play in combating this threat to the peace of mankind, mainly arising out of the fast spreading atheistic doctrines of Communism. If they fail in their duty, then greater disasters await them.

THE INSULTERS ARE INSULTED

For sufficient are We unto thee against those who scoff (xv. 95—Mecca).

Both publicly and privately the Meccan Pagans scoffed at the Prophet and the Qur'ān with the intention of making Islam unpopular among the people. Their meanness knew no bounds when they went to the extent of calling the Prophet of Allah a sorcerer and one afflicted with "infectious madness"! They often asked him to show them miracles and when any such miracle was shown, they took it to be a conjuring trick of a juggler. Naturally such insulting remarks and allegations weighed heavily upon the heart of the Prophet and the feelings of the Muslims were gravely injured. The Prophet was comforted with these words, "Mocked were the Apostles before thee; but I granted respite to the unbelievers. And finally I punished them: then terrible was My requital." And he was further comforted that it would be the insulters who would soon be insulted. "Soon wilt thou see and they (Pagans) will see which of you is afflict-

ed with madness."

It is a pity that the oft-repeated Divine Warning had but little effect upon the minds of the idolaters and, according to the prophecy of the Qur'ān, they were the ones who were scoffed at in the end. Little did they realise that "if there were a Qur'ān with which mountains were moved, or the earth were cloven asunder, or the dead were made to speak, (this would be the one)." Hundreds of the Muslim saints with spiritual power, gained with the aid of the Qur'ān and the guidance of the Holy Prophet, have shown to the world the miracles referred in the above verse. The biographies of the Muslim saints are mellowing with such wonderful miracles. Are the Muslims not proud of this? Are they not proud of the Holy Prophet and the Qur'ān?

SLANDERERS OF 'Ā'YESHAH PUNISHED

Those who brought forward the lie are a body among yourselves: think it not to be an evil to you; on the contrary, it is good for you: to every man among them (will come the punishment) of the sin that he earned, and to him who took on himself the lead among them, will be a Penalty grievous (xxiv. 11—Medina).

The man with "a greater share" in the affair as referred in the verse above was no other than Abdullah bin Ubayy, a stubborn hypocrite of Medina. The life-record of this man can be described by two words, viz. treachery and lies. Hypocrisy was the hobby of his life! It is true to say that Islam would have felt less restraint to spread itself without the presence of this man and consequently the Meccan Pagans would have been subjugated much earlier.

For a fifth-columnist of this type, even his execution would not have been a fitting punishment for his traitorous activities. He was thus left to suffer long his extreme agony and in this state he met his end. But still worse is to follow!

WALID BIN MUGHIRAH'S FALL

- (a) When to him (Walīd bin Mughīrah) are rehearsed Our Signs,
 "Tales of the ancient!" he cries. Soon shall
 We brand (the beast) on the snout (lviii. 15-16—Mecca).
- (b) Leave Me alone, (to deal) with the (creature—
 Walīd bin Mughīrah) whom I created (bare
 and) alone!
 To whom I granted resources in abundance,
 And sons to be by his side!
 To whom I made (life) smooth and comfortable!
 Yet is he greedy—that I should add (yet
 more);—
 By no means! for to Our Signs he has been
 refractory!
 Soon will I visit him with a mount of calamities!
 For he thought and he plotted;—
 Yea, woe to him how he plotted!—
 Then he looked round;
 Then he frowned and he scowled;
 Then he turned back and was haughty;
 Then said he: "This is nothing but magic,
 derived from of old;

"This is nothing but the word of a mortal!"
(lxxi. 11-25—Mecca).

A Meccan pagan magnate, reputed for his great wealth and knowledge but magnetised by the dupery of Abū Jahl, invited his own ruin owing to his hostility to the Prophet and his prejudice of the Revelations.

He was given everything that a man could wish for in this life, and yet he was greedy. He had as many as 100,000 gold coins and large herds of cattle and big beautiful orchards between Mecca and Ṭā'if. But his great wealth did him little good, when he rejected the Message calling it "magic"! How aptly the Qur'ān describes his character!

Soon after the revelation of the verse, "Soon will I visit him with a mount of calamities," his wealth and reputation began to decline. He had ten handsome sons out of whom Khālid, 'Ammārah and Hishām accepted Islam and the rest died leaving him alone to mourn all through his miserable life. He joined the pagan army and was appropriately branded on his nose with the blow of a weapon as prophesied nearly fifteen years ago. And this brand lasted till he died a miserable death.

54

FALL OF ABU LAHAB AND HIS WIFE, UMM JAMĪL

Perish the hands of the Father of Flame (Abū Lahab)! Perish he!

No profit to him from all his wealth, and all his gains!

Burnt soon will he be in a Fire of Blazing Flame!

His wife shall carry the (crackling) wood—as fuel!

A twisted rope of palm-leaf fibre round her (own) neck! (cxi. 1-5—Mecca).

Abū Lahab was the uncle of the Prophet and as such he should have been the first to accept the Truth, but unfortunately he was the first to reject it. When the Prophet, for the first time, summoned his own people to the Call, this contemptible creature raised a heavy stone to hit the Prophet. But little did he then realise that he was soon to be pelted with many similar stones.

For some reason or other he did not take part in the battle of Badr and when the news of the idolaters' heavy losses reached him, grief overweighed his

heart. But destiny had something worse in store for him. He was infected with a deadly disease of plague. According to the then Arab custom such a diseased man was not to be kept in a house and as such he was carried outside the town where he lay alone and uncared to meet his death. The dead body lay on the ground unattended for three days and due to the hot Arabian sun it gave out a very bad smell. Some hired negroes dug a pit and, poking it with long sticks, let it tumble down into the pit. Then came a shower of stones which was followed by sand.

His wife, Umm Jamīl, was the neighbour of the Prophet, but she surpassed even her husband in her hostility to the Prophet. She collected big thorns and, with a malicious design, scattered them near the house of the Prophet. But soon she met her evil end. She was strangled to death by a halter of palm-fibre round her neck exactly in the same manner as forecast by the Qur'ān.

55

‘ĀṢ BIN WĀ’IL IS CURSED

Hast thou then seen the (sort of) man (‘Āṣ bin Wā’il) who rejects Our Signs, yet says: “I shall certainly be given wealth and children?”

Has he penetrated to the Unseen, or has he taken a contract with (God) Most Gracious?

Nay? We shall record what he says, and We shall add and add to his punishment.

To Us shall return all that he talks of, and he shall appear before Us bare and alone (xix. 77-80—Mecca).

Khabab bin Hārith was a devout Muslim blacksmith to whom ‘Āṣ bin Wā’il, a rich Meccan pagan, owed some money. Upon demand ‘Āṣ said, “If you give up Islam, I shall pay you the dues.” This provocative speech of the pagan made Khabab say, “I shall never give up Islam, even till the day you rise to life again.” The foolish man ironically remarked: “In that case I shall pay you on the Day of Resurrection,” thus wistfully thinking that his sons and riches would accompany him to serve his needs on that Day.

Needless to add that this pagan was duly requited for his insolent behaviour to the Revelation. His two sons of whom he was very proud, deserted him and embraced Islam and he died a death of disgrace.

56

FALL OF ABU JAHL

(a) So he gave nothing in charity, nor did he pray! But on the contrary he rejected Truth and turned away!

Woe to thee, (O man!) yea, woe!

Again woe to thee, (O man!) yea, woe! (lxxv. 31-32, 34-35—Mecca).

(b) Seest thou one (Abū Jahl) who forbids—

A votary when he (turns) to pray? (xcvi. 9-10—Mecca).

(c) Let him beware! If he desist not, We will drag him by the forelock,—

A lying, sinful forelock! (xcvi. 15-16—Mecca).

The reference here is to Abū Jahl, the uncle of the Holy Prophet, but the arch-enemy of the Prophet and Islam. It is equally applicable to those characterised by Abū Jahl-like minds and it is no surprise that such people are still seen today.

Abū Jahl was the main cause of all hostility to Islam and it was on his account that the early Muslims underwent various inhuman tortures. From

the above verses it is quite evident that he was warned in advance to cease his hostility to the Truth but conceit overruled his mind and eventually brought his end in the manner as prophesied.

It was he who had roused the Meccan pagans to fight the peaceful Muslims and was the commander of the pagan army which fought against the Muslims on the field of Badr. It was the most crucial battle that Muslims ever fought. The Muslims won the battle and the pagans suffered heavy casualties. Abū Jahl was killed by a young Anṣār, Mu'ādh bin 'Amr. Suffering from fatal wounds and unable to move, he lay on the ground unattended, when 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd came up to him and lightened his body from the weight of his head. A string was tied round the ears of the dead head and was dragged on the ground. The head was caught by "the lying sinful forelook" and at the command of the Prophet it was thrown into a nearby old well. Abū Jahl met the fate as prophesied in the Qur'ān about fifteen years ago. But still worse was to follow!

THE CALUMNIATORS OF CHASTE MUSLIM WOMEN ARE CURSED

Those who slander chaste women, indiscreet but believing, are cursed in this life and in the Hereafter: for them is a grievous penalty (xxiv. 23—Medina).

Slandering is a social evil and as such it is condemned in every society. In fact, defamation of any kind is hateful—particularly the defamation of the weaker sex as this seriously affects the life of the woman concerned.

The Qur'ān curses the slanderers of virtuous women. Such mean characters are punished in some form or other in this world. Let such a slanderer verify this truth from the accounts of his or her life.

SORCERY CURSED

(a) . . . And they learned what harmed them, nor what profited them. And they knew that the buyers of (magic) would have no share in the happiness of the Hereafter . . . (ii. 102—Medina).

(b) . . . But sorcerers will not prosper (x. 77—Mecca).

This malefic art has always been the subject of awe and terror and its origin goes as far back as very distant times. Its traces could even be found in the ancient civilisations of Babylonia and Egypt. It exists even today but on account of its wide condemnation it has lost all popularity and is now gradually disappearing.

In the past, the possessor of this baleful art was praised rather than condemned. We read that kings both in the East and West employed magicians at their courts to give them entertainment. But more often than not, this art was used for baneful and evil purposes.

It is evident that the display of this art makes

the beholder unduly spell-bound, since it is associated with things which the eyes could neither believe nor the minds conceive. And since man is more interested in "seeing is believing," rather than "believing without seeing," he often attaches undue importance to this art. But the impressions gathered from show of black magic are but delusive and temporary. By no means does this art ever benefit the practitioner or others but, on the contrary, it always does harm to both.

With the spread of the Qur'ānic views on sorcery, it has now been banned in almost every country and the sorcerers are subject to punishment under the law. Is the world conscious of this Qur'ānic obligation?

USURY CONDEMNED

(a) . . . But God hath permitted trade and forbidden usury . . .

(b) God will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds of charity: for He loveth not creatures ungrateful and wicked (ii. 275-276—Medina).

Usury, being one of the great social evils, is condemned by Islam in the strongest terms. In the eyes of Islam both the lender and the borrower of the money on the basis of usury are punishable.

It is often seen that a hard-fisted money-lender, being aware of the difficult pecuniary position of the borrower, advances his surplus money lying idle with him, and for the use of this money he charges the borrower high rates. In other words, he takes an unfair advantage of the hard-up man and renounces obligations that bind humanity. In a number of cases, the amount of interest surprisingly exceeds the loan advanced. Naturally such a system in the long run provokes class-hatred and the present century provides a good example of such hatred. Islam,

being the religion based on the ties of love and humanity, proclaims equality and fraternity and as such it can never agree with the evil system of usury.

With its condemnation, usury has been deprived of all benefits. The seeming benefits of usury are but illusive. The example is not far to seek. Just in your own town or village, trace the life-story of a person involved in usury and you will certainly find him miserable.

60

OPPORTUNISTS CONDEMNED

There are among men some who serve God, as it were, on the verge : if good befalls them, they are, therewith, well content ; but if a trial comes to them, they turn on their faces. They lose both this world and the Hereafter : that is a loss for all to see (xxii. 11—Medina).

These religious time-serving people have no principles and as such they have little faith in any religion. Their line of action is always guided by circumstances which they think can offer them the best advantages. This is because they put their self-interest before principles. The Qur'ān has no sympathy for such people. How many such opportunists do we find today?

61

NATURAL CALAMITIES AND WARS ARE A PUNISHMENT

Say : "He hath power to send calamities on you, from above and below, or to cover you with confusion in party strife giving you a taste of mutual vengeance—each from the other . . ." (vi. 65—Mecca).

Natural calamities take a heavy toll of human life every year. The statistics show that more deaths are caused by natural calamities than by natural sickness. Has man power to check tornadoes and earthquakes which frequently occur on this earth? Is not this a punishment from God?

In addition to these calamities, the present world faces other internal calamities raging on a much wider scale than at any time before. They are the political strifes, party-strifes, ism-strifes and riots which too cause no less a loss of human life. How accurately the above verse presents in a nutshell the picture of the present world-unrest and tension! Are not these dissensions directly the result of God's wrath?

MATERIALISTS REWARDED IN THIS WORLD ONLY

- (a) Those who desire the life of the Present and its glitter,—to them We shall pay (the price of) their deeds therein,—without diminution. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but the Fire . . . (xi. 15-16—Mecca).
- (b) There is nothing but our life in this world! We shall die and we live! But we shall never be raised up again! (xxiii. 37—Mecca).
- (c) And they say: "What is there but our life in this world? "We shall die and we live, and nothing but Time can destroy us." But of that they have no knowledge: they merely conjecture (xlv. 24—Mecca).

The doctrine of materialism is not a new one but it existed as far back as in the seventh century as the Qur'ān hints in the above passages. Materialism arose among the early Greek thinkers.

This doctrine altogether does away with the belief in the life in the Hereafter as it expounds that the death of an individual is the final end of his existence.

It may safely be added that it has gained wider support since the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in the nineteenth century. The recent remarkable achievements of science have played no less important a part in further strengthening this doctrine. More or less materialism and atheism are akin to each other.

The Qur'ān promises rewards to the materialists for their deeds in this world as desired by them, but they shall have nothing but Fire in the Hereafter.

RESTORATIONISM CONDEMNED

- (a) And they (Jews) say : "The Fire shall not touch us but for a few numbered days." Say : "Have ye taken a promise from God, for He never breaks His promise ? Or is it that ye say of God what you do not know ?" (ii. 80—Medina).
- (b) This is because they say : "The Fire shall not touch us but for a few numbered days"; for their forgeries deceive them as to their own religion (iii. 24—Medina).
- (c) Verily God has cursed the Unbelievers and prepared for them a Blazing Fire,—
To dwell therein for ever (*abada*). No protector will they find, nor helper (xxxiii. 64-65—Medina).

The belief in the doctrine of restorationism or universalism leads man to the self-confident thought that after the so-called purgation, he will eventually be restored to the favour of God. It is evident that such a belief encourages man to take an indifferent and less serious attitude towards his moral and religious duties to God and His creatures and as such he

will never hesitate to usurp the rights of others with the wistful thinking that after purgation he will ultimately be admitted into the Grace of God. This is difficult to believe as this view does away with the right conduct of man which is so essential for his healthy survival as well as betterment.

The Qur'ān, being the practical Book of Guidance, does not, therefore, support this absurd and dangerous view and correct views are expressed without ambiguity in the above verses.

The universalists, whoso they may be, should ponder over the word *abada*, meaning for ever.

THE QUR'ĀN REVEALED THAT THE EARTH WAS ROUND

(a) One day the Earth will be changed to a different Earth, and so will be the Heavens and (men) will be marshalled forth before God, the One, the Irresistible (xiv. 48—Medina).

(b) And when the Earth is flattened out (*muddat*), and casts forth what is within it and becomes (clean) empty (lxxxiv. 3-4—Mecca).

The word *muddat* could mean "spread out," "flattened" or "made wider by pressing". Thus the verse clearly suggests that the earth was never flat. In other words, its shape could only be round. But when it is flattened, its surface area will be much more than 197,000,000 sq. miles.

The date of the revelation of this Meccan verse may safely be put between 609 and 622 C.E., at the time when it was universally believed that the earth was flat. But early in the seventh century the Qur'ān declared the earth to be round but would be flat on the Day of Resurrection. It will be transformed to an altogether different shape beyond any recognition.

After nearly one thousand years in the fifteenth century Copernicus came out with his theory that the sun is the centre of the system of planets and in the sixteenth century Galileo Galilei, upholding the Copernican theory, declared that the earth moves round the sun. Thus it becomes evident that astronomers learnt about the real shape of the earth much later than what the Qur'ān had already revealed, and their inventions confirmed the Qur'ānic truth about the round shape of the earth.

How could the unlettered Prophet (Muḥammad) in the seventh century know about the true shape of the earth, if he had himself composed the Qur'ān as some critics allege?

THE SCIENCE OF MEDICINE CANNOT DO THIS

Say: "Think ye, if God took away your hearing and your sight, and sealed up your hearts, who—a god other than God—could restore them to you?" ... (vi. 46—Mecca).

How many unfortunate deaf and blind people do we see on this earth? Can even the best of the doctors heal any of them? And how many people every day die of heart failure all of a sudden? Can the doctors bring such hearts back to their former position?

MAN'S POWER IS LIMITED

Verily, the knowledge of the Hour is with God (alone). It is He Who sends down rain and He Who knows what is in the wombs. Nor does anyone know what it is that he will earn on the morrow: nor does anyone know in what land he is to die. Verily with God is full knowledge and He is acquainted (with all things) (xxxix. 34—Mecca).

The five things mentioned in the verse belong to the subject of the Unseen and as such the knowledge of them all entirely rests with God alone. No human mind can reach the knowledge thereof, no matter how great be its progress in the various fields of Knowledge.

Man is now able to bring down artificial rain but the objection still remains as there cannot be any such rain without vapour and the agents causing the vapour are subjected to the laws governed by God himself.

GOD PROTECTS A SMALL NATION FROM A BIG NATION

. . . And did not God check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief . . . (ii. 251—Medina).

In history we find this great truth that the balance of power between nations has always been maintained to safeguard the rights of the smaller nations. When a nation reached its peak of conquests it ultimately became overpowered with pride and as such it ruthlessly crushed the human rights of the conquered. Then soon arose some other rival power and the conflict between the two soon started, thus saving the smaller nations from the incursions of the bigger ones. The accounts of the rise and fall of the various empires justify this truth. And at present how many small nations are protected on account of this balance of power?

The Communists wish lustfully for the global empire and to achieve this objective they are now heavily engaged to extend their empire by various baneful means. But they will be repelled by the West in order to save the world from corruption.

EVOLUTIONS OF THE EARTH AND LIFE

Do not the Unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one Unit of Creation), before We clove them asunder? We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe? (xxi. 30—Mecca).

Evolution of the earth and evolution of all life are hinted in the above verse.

It may be recalled that the Qur'ān was revealed in the beginning of the seventh century C.E. when man knew but little about the evolutionary theory, botany, protoplasm, etc. It was not until the eighteenth century C.E. that a serious thought was given to these interesting subjects vitally connected with man. Since then, man through extensive research has known a good deal of these subjects but the story is not yet complete. Nevertheless, the recent knowledge of man, about the various cometary and planetary eras of the earth and the development of protoplasmic beds in the third planetary era confirm the Qur'ānic theory of the evolution of the earth and for that matter the evolution of all life.

COMMUNISM WILL BE VANQUISHED

- (a) . . . And Thou givest sustenance to whom Thou pleasest without measure (iii. 27—Medina).
- (b) And in no wise covet those things in which Allah has bestowed His gifts more freely on some of you than on others : to men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn : but ask Allah of His bounty, for Allah hath full knowledge of all things (iv. 32—Medina).
- (c) The Unbelievers spend their wealth to hinder (men) from the path of Allah, and so will they continue to spend ; but in the end they will have (only) regrets and sighs ; at length they will be overcome ; and the unbelievers will be gathered together to Hell (viii. 36—Medina).
- (d) Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life, while they thought they were acquiring good by their works. They are those who deny the Signs of their Lord and the fact of their having to meet Him (in the Hereafter) : vain will be their works, nor shall We, on the Day of Judgment, give

them any weight (xviii. 104-105—Mecca).

- (e) Know they not that Allah enlarges the provision or restricts it, for any He pleases ? Verily, in this are signs for those who believe ! (xxxix. 52—Mecca).

Communism is the revolutionary socialist movement which believes that the capitalist society has now entered the phase of its decline and, therefore, the working class must take over power from the capitalist class, thus aiming to bring an end to the class-division between owners and producers.

The system is based on dialectical materialism or scientific socialism expounded by Marx and Engels. It aims at the wholesale transformation of law, politics, morals and art.

The Communists are out and out atheists and as such the Qur'ānic verses revealed in respect of the Disbelievers may safely be applied to them. The theory and ideal expounded by Communism is quite inconsistent with the theory and ideal that the Qur'ān proclaims and as such Islam can never reach an agreement with this system. Due to the modern world's ever-increasing industrialisation, the movement is fast gaining strength, as it gives alluring "promise of plenty" to the working class and consequently this class falls an easy victim to its guiles. The scope of its influence can be realised from the

fact that there is hardly a single country left in which this movement is not found.

Strange though it may appear to the non-Muslims, Islam has long given a healthy and practical solution for checking this diabolical movement. Zakāt (religious tax) is one of the five cardinal principles of Islam and according to this principle the rich Muslim has to pay the Zakāt to the poor Muslim at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ p.a. All idle cash, gold, silver, live-stock and trade goods are taxable. The minimum amount taxable is Rs. 52 (£ 4). In other words, if an amount of Rs. 52 remains unused with a Muslim or an equivalent of gold or silver, and at the same time he has no debts to pay, then according to Islamic view such a man is not poor. Now if this principle is sincerely practised, then there will hardly be left a single needy Muslim on the face of the globe and thus the ultimate aim of Communism, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need," will be realised overnight as far as the entire Muslim nation is concerned. And if all the non-Muslims adopt this humane and practical principle, then real peace will soon dwell on this earth.

The capitalist class ignored their moral duty towards their less fortunate brethren; this has thus resulted in the evolution of Communism, the "Scourge of God" in the twentieth century. History

of mankind reveals that the "Scourge of God" visits this earth in some form or other, when man, by his own follies, becomes a victim of the large scale moral depression. Was Attila not the "Scourge of God" in the fifth century?

It is difficult to say as to how long this "Scourge of God" will last, but we can say this much with certainty that it will disappear one day. Nevertheless the Muslims and the Christians must combine their sources and energies to crush this un-Islamic and un-Christian system of Communism. It is a system that challenges the Faith and Faith shall ultimately prevail over it. The Qur'ān and the Bible will save mankind from the grips of this monster!

70

REGARDING THE ADVENT OF JESUS TO THE EARTH

- (a) And there is none of the People of the Book but must believe in him (Jesus) before his death; and on the Day of Judgment he will be a witness against them (iv. 159—Medina).
- (b) And (Jesus) shall be a Sign (for the coming of) the Hour (of Judgment); therefore have no doubt about (the Hour), but follow ye Me: this is a Straight Way (xliii. 61—Mecca).

Jesus never died a natural death, "but Allah took him (Jesus) unto Himself. Allah was ever Mighty, Wise." Jesus was born on this earth and as such he must return to this earth to meet his death. For, in the words of the Qur'ān, "There shall you live, and there shall you die, and thence shall you be brought forth."

His re-advent on this planet is one of the portents of the close approach of the Day just as his very virgin birth is one of the portents of Allah.

71

THE GOG AND MAGOG WILL BE LET LOOSE

- (a) But there is a ban on any population which We have destroyed: that they shall not return:
- (b) Until the Gog and Magog (people) are let through (their barrier), and they swiftly swarm from every hill (xxi. 95-96—Mecca).

The Gog and Magog were the wild tribes who lived in between two mountains and their location still remains a controversial question. However, we are here more concerned with their existence rather than their location in a particular place.

These wild people, like Attila of the medieval world, touched nothing that they did not destroy. Dhul-Qarnain punished them by erecting a solid structure between the oppressors and the oppressed. In the words of the Qur'ān, "And (Gog and Magog) were not able to surmount, nor could they pierce (barrier)."

But this barrier will turn into dust and the Gog and Magog will rush out from the valley making

incursions on everything and everybody they could lay their hands on. But ultimately they will be destroyed.

The appearance of the Gog and Magog is one of the portents of the close approach of the Day of Resurrection.

72

APPEARANCE OF THE STRANGE BEAST

And when the Word is fulfilled against them (the unjust), We shall produce from the earth a Beast to (face) them : he will speak to them, for that mankind did not believe with assurance in Our Signs (xxvii. 82—Mecca).

The appearance of the earth's strange beast is one of the portents of the near approach of the Day. This beast will be about 120 feet long and its limbs will resemble those of several different animals and birds. He will be too agile to catch and will run and fly about all over the earth, visiting every living human being and speaking to him in his own language. Ultimately he will disappear altogether.

73

THE SUN SHALL RISE FROM THE WEST BEFORE THE DAY OF RESURRECTION

Are they waiting to see if the angels come to them, or thy Lord (Himself), or certain of the Signs of thy Lord ! The day that certain of the Signs of the Lord do come, no good will it do to a soul to believe in them then if it believed not before nor earned righteousness through the Faith (vi. 158—Mecca).

“One of the portents” referred to in the verse is commonly taken to be the rising of the sun from the West. This may sound ridiculous to a non-Muslim as it has never happened like that and as such it is an impossibility. But there is nothing which God cannot do. Do you still doubt that this will not happen when you have gone through the various Qur’ānic Promises and Prophecies which have all come true?

74

MOUNTAINS SHALL VANISH

- (a) Thou seest the mountains and thinkest them firmly fixed : but they shall pass away as the clouds pass away: (such is) the artistry of God, Who disposes of all things in perfect order : for He is well-acquainted with all that ye do (xxvii. 88—Mecca).
- (b) And the mountains will fly hither and thither (lii. 10—Mecca).
- (c) And the mountains will be like wool (lxx. 9—Mecca).
- (d) When the mountains vanish . . . (lxxxix. 3—Mecca).

The disappearance of mountains is expressed in a beautiful simile of xxvii. 88. Elsewhere we read that God’s Plan is to flatten the earth completely and as such the mountains will have then little use on the flat earth. They will, therefore, go in the world of non-existence.

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- (c) And the mountains will be like wool (lxx. 9—Mecca).
- (d) When the mountains vanish . . . (lxxxix. 3—Mecca).

The disappearance of mountains is expressed in a beautiful simile of xxvii. 88. Elsewhere we read that God’s Plan is to flatten the earth completely and as such the mountains will have then little use on the flat earth. They will, therefore, go in the world of non-existence.

75

SEAS SHALL BE SEIZED WITH COMMOTION

- (a) When the Oceans boil over with a swell (lxxxi. 6—Mecca).
- (b) When the Oceans are suffered to burst forth (lxxxii. 3—Mecca).

About three-fourth of the earth's surface is now covered with water and the remaining one-fourth is covered with land. The water is an important factor in the life of every creature as it is instrumental for the evolution of all life. Before the creation of Man, "His (God's) Throne was over the waters."

When the earth is flattened, it will result in a tremendous disturbance of the whole equilibrium. The waters will thus naturally sweep down all landmarks. But the waters too, like all other things, will ultimately vanish as we read in the Glorious Book elsewhere—"All that is on the earth will perish."

76

HEAVENLY BODIES WILL DISAPPEAR

- (a) The Day the heaven shall be rent asunder with clouds, and angels shall be sent down, descending . . . (xxv. 25—Mecca).
- (b) On the Day when the firmament will be in dreadful commotion (lii. 9—Mecca).
- (c) The Day that the sky will be like molten brass (lxx. 8—Mecca).
- (d) And the moon is buried in darkness, and the sun and moon are joined together (lxxv. 8-9—Mecca).
- (e) And the heavens shall be opened as if there were doors (lxxviii. 19—Mecca).
- (f) When the sun (with its spacious light) is folded up; when the stars fall, losing their lustre (lxxx. 1-2—Mecca).
- (g) When the Sky is cleft asunder; when the Stars are scattered (lxxxii. 1-2—Mecca).

The Law of Gravitation governing the bodies will one day suddenly cease to operate and as such the whole firmament will be in tremendous commotion resulting in great occurrences as prophesied in the above verses. The present creation will one day

meet utter destruction which will subsequently follow an altogether new creation when nothing but Reality shall prevail everywhere.

And God is able to do anything and everything. Nothing is impossible for Him to do. "He it is Who produceth creation, then reproduceth it, and it is easier for Him." The laws of nature, as we call them, are, in fact, the laws of God and as such they are all subject to His Will.

It is a tragic thing to note that, despite the remarkable progress of man in various fields of Knowledge, a vast majority of mankind still remains ignorant of such matters as the science of "being," the whence and wither of man and the wonderful processes of creative development. And eternity is a subject on which no human mind can qualify an opinion and the whole history of the universe is only a small fragment of eternity. Human mind, therefore, cannot fully comprehend the meaning of this mystery.

The Qur'ān hints at this subject in the words: "He directeth the ordinance from the heaven unto the earth; then it ascendeth unto Him in a Day, whereof the measure is a thousand years of that ye reckon." Almost a similar idea is expressed by an old hymn, "A thousand ages in THY sight are but an evening gone!"

77

THE DEAD SHALL COME TO
LIFE AGAIN

- (a) They say: "What! When we are reduced to bones and dust, should we really be raised up (to be) a new creation?"
Say: "(Nay!) be ye stones or iron,
"Or created matter which, in your minds, is hardest (to be raised up)."—Then will they say: "Who will cause us to return?" Say: "He Who created you first!" . . . (xvii. 49-51—Mecca).
- (b) . . . And We shall gather them all together, nor shall We leave out any one of them (xviii, 47—Mecca).
- (c) . . . The trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them all together (xviii. 99—Mecca).
- (d) The Day that We roll up the heavens like a scroll rolled up for books (completed),—even as We produced the first Creation, so shall We produce a new one: a promise We have undertaken: truly shall We fulfil it (xxi. 104—Mecca).
- (e) It is He Who begins (the process of) creation; then repeats it; and for Him it is most easy . . . (xxx. 27—Mecca).

- (f) It is God Who has created you: further, He has provided for your sustenance; then He will cause you to die; and again He will give you life . . . (xxx. 40—Mecca).
- (g) Verily We shall give life to the dead, and We record that which they send before and that which they leave behind, and of all things have We taken account in a clear Book (of evidence) (xxxvi. 12—Mecca).
- (h) The Trumpet shall be sounded, when behold! from the sepulchres (men) will rush forth to their Lord! (xxxvi. 51—Mecca).
- (i) The Trumpet will (just) be sounded, when all that are in the heavens and on earth will swoon, except such as it will please God (to exempt). Then will a second one be sounded, when, behold, they will be standing and looking on! (xxxix. 68—Mecca).
- (j) Does man think that We cannot assemble his bones? Nay, We are able to put together in perfect order the very tips of his fingers (lxxv. 3-4—Mecca).
- (k) Was he not a drop of sperm emitted (in lowly form).
Then did he become a leech-like clot; then did (God) make and fashion (him) in due proportion.
And of him He made two sexes, male and female.
Has not He (the same), the power to give life to the dead? (lxxv. 37-40—Mecca).

- (l) What! Are ye the more difficult to create or the heaven (above, God) hath constructed it (lxxix. 27—Mecca).

These are only a few of the many quotations on the subject.

Belief in the life in the Hereafter is one of the essential articles of the Islamic faith. It inspires the believer to show good conduct both by word and deed and thus makes him a good citizen. In return he is promised of a handsome reward in the Hereafter. On the contrary, disbelief in it makes his conduct irresponsible in the world.

The Qur'ān deals with the subject of the Life in the Hereafter exhaustively and there is hardly a Sūrah in which this subject is not referred.

He who disbelieves in the Life of the Hereafter must think of his first creation!

THE EARTH SHALL SPEAK!

- (a) Verily what is on earth, We shall make but as dust and dry soil (xviii.8—Mecca).
- (b) And the Earth will shine with the glory of its Lord: the Record (of Deeds) will be placed (open); the prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward; and a just decision pronounced between them; and they will not be wronged (in the least) (xxxix. 69—Mecca).
- (c) Nay! When the earth is pounded to powder and thy Lord cometh, and His angels, rank upon rank (lxxxix. 21-22—Mecca).
- (d) When the Earth is shaken to her (utmost) convulsion and the Earth throws up her burdens (from within), and man cries (distressed): "What is the matter with her?"—On that Day will she declare her tidings: for that thy Lord will have given her inspiration (xcix. 1-5—Mecca).

The earth will undergo immense changes when it is shaken with the most violent earthquake resulting in the huge phenomenal changes quite unfamiliar to the human eye. It will thus be transformed into an altogether different earth.

Due to the most violent disturbance, it will pour out all its treasures that are now lying hidden inside it. It will be given the power of speech and will narrate all that happened on it since man was first placed thereon.

This is not a make-believe story but it is the prophecy of no other book than the Qur'ān. Still there are minds who think that the prophesied vast phenomenal changes in the universe are impossible or purely imaginary. What have they to say about the interesting account of the evolution of the earth?

THIS SHALL HAPPEN TO EVERY
HUMAN BEING ONE DAY

- (a) (It will be said to him): "Read thine (own) record: sufficient is thy soul this day to make out an account against thee (xvii. 14—Mecca).
- (b) The day ye shall see it, every mother giving suck shall forget her suckling babe, and every pregnant female shall drop her load (unformed): thou shalt see mankind as in a drunken riot, yet not drunk; but dreadful will be the Wrath of God (xxii. 2—Medina).
- (c) On the Day when their tongues, their hands, and their feet will bear witness against them as to their actions.
On that Day God will pay them back (all) their just dues, and they will realise that God is the (very) Truth, that makes all things manifest (xxiv. 24-25—Medina).
- (d) O mankind! do your duty to your Lord, and fear (the coming of) a Day when no father can avail aught for his son, nor a son avail aught for his father. Verily, the promise of God is true: let not then this present life deceive you nor let the Chief Deceiver deceive you about God (xxx. 33—Mecca).

- (e) On that Day will men proceed in companies sorted out to be shown the Deeds that thy (had done).
Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good see it!
And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil see it (xcix. 6-8—Mecca).
- (f) (It is) a Day whereon men will be like moths scattered about (ci. 4—Mecca).

Elsewhere we read in the Book, "Not without purpose did We create heaven and earth and all between." Every existing thing, whether living or non-living, is expressive of Divine purpose and the perfect planning of God.

Man, like any other created thing, has not been created just for idle sport but there is a purpose behind his creation. The Qur'ān makes this point lucidly clear in the words: "Lo! We have placed all that is in the earth as an ornament thereof that We may try them: which of them is best in conduct." His deeds must therefore be judged by his Creator and must be rewarded accordingly.

God is never tired of creation and the verses make it emphatically clear that He will raise them to life again and gather them together on the Great Day in order to judge their deeds on this planet.

